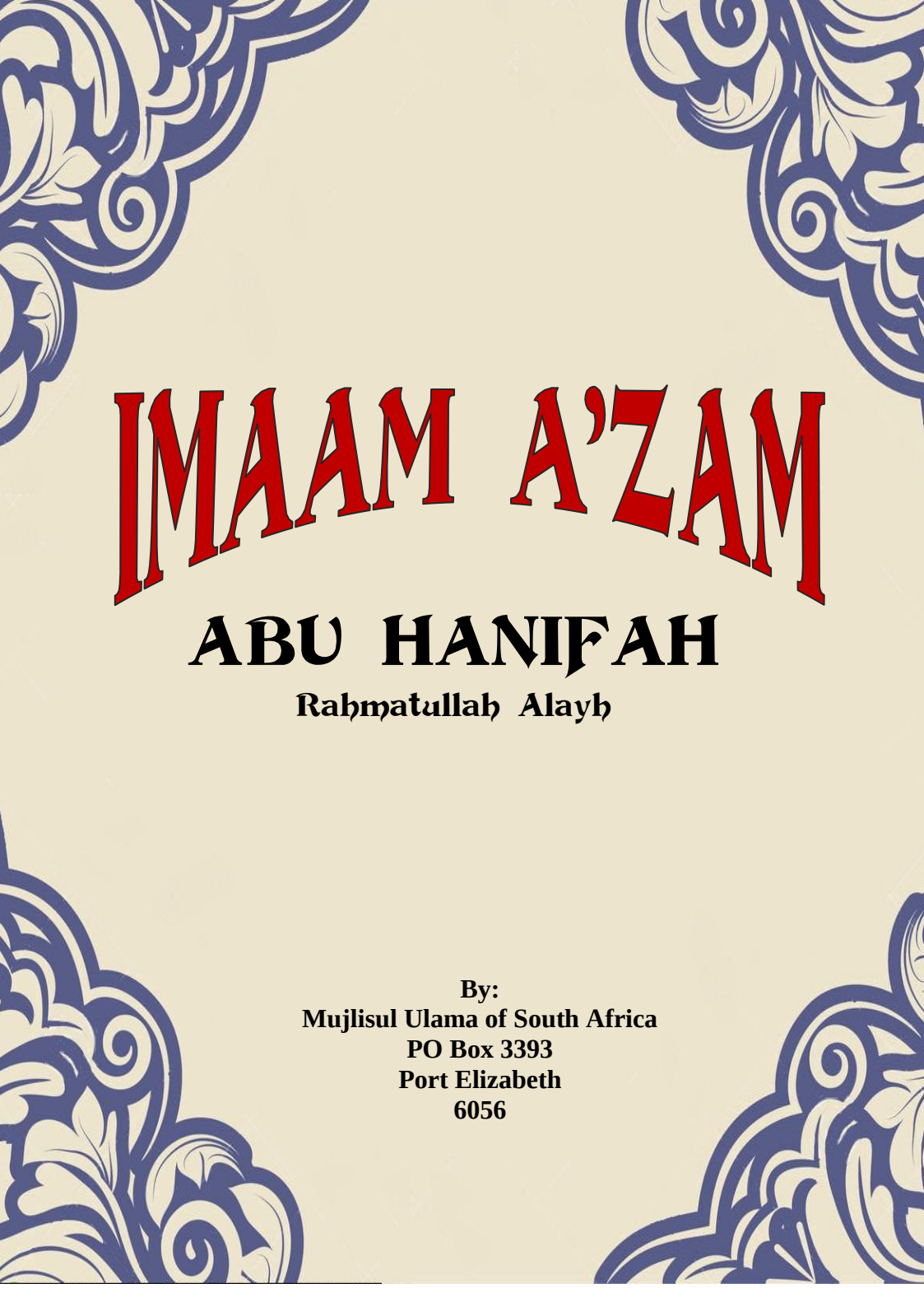




IMAAM A'ZAM

ABU HANIFAH

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INTRODUCTION

Among the great, illustrious and noble *Warathatul Ambiya* – the Heirs and Representatives of the Ambiya – the most and much maligned is Imaam A'zam, Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh). The *haasideen* (*the jealous ones*) and the *haaqideen* (*the malicious ones*) had left no stone unturned in their satanic attempts and endeavours with their slanders, falsehood and calumnies to ruin the glittering reputation of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh). When Allah Azza Wa Jal projects His *Khalifah* on earth, then the entire mankind and jinkind together cannot succeed in their pernicious efforts of slander and vituperation.

Despite the nefarious plots and endeavours of the malicious detractors, Imaam Abu Hanifah stood out as the greatest Beacon of Islam after the Sahaabah. All great Ulama and Mujtahideen after the era of the Sahaabah paled into insignificance in the radiant and dazzling *Noor* of Ilm, Taqwa and Ma'rifat of Imaam A'zam. This irrefutable fact has been vigorously acknowledged and emphasized by innumerable Aimmah, Fuqaha and Muhadditheen of the Salafus Saaliheen era and of the Muta-akh-khireen era. In this treatise we present the testification of the illustrious authorities of Islam whose unequivocal praise and respect for Imaam Abu Hanifah debunk the slanderous contentions of the detractors of this great Mujtahid Imaam.

Some short-sighted Muhadditheen have also been dastardly affected by the malady of slander which the envious detractors had spread. However, despite all the

evil machinations of the detractors, the brilliant Star of Uloom outshone everyone. All Fuqaha and Muhadditheen after Imaam Abu Hanifah were his Students directly or via the Chain of his Students.

The lofty realm of Fiqh occupied by Imaam A'zam, constrained Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayhi), who was Imaam Abu Hanifah's Student via Imaam Muhammad, to say: *"We are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh."* Imaam Abu Hanifah was the very first Mujtahid Imaam who had codified and arranged the Shariah in systematic form – a form which all Fuqaha of all Math-habs after him adopted.

The worst and the hypocritical enemies of Imaam Abu Hanifah in our age are the moron Salafis who peddle the satanic theme that Imaam Abu Hanifah's methodology is to override Hadith with opinion. This is furthest from the truth as will become clear in the ensuing pages. There is consensus of the Ulama and Fuqaha on the claim that according to Imaam Abu Hanifah even a *Dhaeef* (Weak) Hadith has precedence over *Qiyaas* (Analogical Reasoning) and *Raai'* (Opinion).

This is the first part of the treatise to show who was this illustrious personality, Imaam A'zam Abu Hanifah whose Math-hab two thirds of the Ummah follow. Insha-Allah, the second and perhaps a third part, shall also be published.

Mujlisul Ulama of S.A.

WHAT AL-HAAFIZ IBN HAJAR AL-HAITAMI ASH-SHAAFI' SAID ABOUT IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami Ash-Shaafi' (died 973 Hijri) is among the great and illustrious Authorities of the Shaafi' Math-hab. Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami (Rahmatullah alayh) wrote in refutation of the vituperation of the enemies and detractors of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alyh), the Kitaab, *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan fi Manaaqibil Imaamil A'zam Abi Hanifah An-Nu'maan*.

In his Kitaab, Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami adequately refutes and disposes of the evil vituperation concocted by the *haasideen* (the jealous ones) and the *haaqideen* (the malicious ones) against Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh). Even other illustrious Shaafi' Fuqaha before Al-Haitami had written elaborate refutations of the enemies of Imaam Abu Hanifah. All of them highlighted the wonders and virtues of Imaam Abu Hanifah. All those who are just, fair and devoid of bigotry and malice will not fail to fall in love with Imaam A'zam after being made aware of this great or greatest Representative of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) after the Sahaabah.

In this chapter are extracts from *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan* of Haafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami Ash-Shaafi'. In the introduction of *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*, Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami writes:

“Some misguided bigots presented to me a book whose authorship is attributed to Imaam Ghazaali. The book contained the vilest vituperation, bigotry, denigration and disparagement of the unique, incomparable Imaam of the

Aimmah Mujtahideen, Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh). The vituperation in the book in reality deafens the ears.....

In reality, Hujjatul Islam, Imaam Ghazaali is not the author of that book. In fact, Imaam Ghazaali speaks glowingly of Imaam Abu Hanifah and lauds accolades on him in his kitaab, *Ihyaa-ul Uloom*. Furthermore, in the vituperative kitaab which was presented to me, the name of the author is stated as Mahmood Al-Ghazaali. This Mahmood is not Hujjatul Islam, Imaam Ghazaali. It is also recorded in the *haashiyah (commentary)* of this book that Mahmood Al-Ghazaali was a Mu'tazili and that he is not Hujjatul Islam."

Shaikh Shihaabuddin Ahmad Bin Hajar Al-Haitami, Al-Makki As-Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh), who flourished in the 9th Islamic century, goes on to say in his Kitaab:

"In a dream it was heard that Allah Baari Ta'ala said: "I am by the Knowledge of Abu Hanifah." That is, Allah Ta'ala has accorded protection and Maqbooliyat (Acceptance) to the Knowledge of Imaam Abu Hanifah. Allah Ta'ala is well-pleased with his Knowledge. He has infused barkat in it, and in those who have adopted his Math-hab.

The adversaries of Imaam Abu Hanifah acknowledge that he had taken precedence in Fiqh, hence Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"The people are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh."* He also said: *"Whoever intends to acquire Fiqh, should cling to Abu Hanifah and his Companions."*

Imaam Shaafi' said to Imaam Maalik (Rahmatullah alayh): *"What is your opinion of Abu Hanifah?"* Imaam Maalik responded: *"I saw a man (i.e. Abu Haniah) if he claims that this pillar is of gold, he will prove it (rationally)."*

When Imaam Shaafi' went to Baghdaad, he went to make *ziyaarat* of Imaam Abu Hanifah's Qabr. He performed two raka'ts without raising his hands (i.e. Rafa' Yadain as the Shaafis do). In another narration it is mentioned that he had performed the two raka'ts of Fajr and did not recite the Qunoot. When he was questioned regarding this omission, Imaam Shaafi' said: *"For the respect of this Imaam (it is not appropriate) to act in conflict in his presence."*

Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"Abu Hanifah was born for Fiqh and Wara' (Taqwa of a very lofty status)."* Nadhr Bin Shumaill (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"With regard to Fiqh, the people (i.e. the Ulama) were asleep until Abu Hanifah woke them."*

Once Imaam Abu Hanifah was in the presence of Khalifah Al-Mansoor. Isaaa Bin Musaa who was an Aabid and Zaahid, said to the Khalifah: *"This (i.e. Imaam Abu Hanifah) is the Aalim of the dunya."* Al-Mansoor said to Imaam Abu Hanifah: *"From whom did you acquire Knowledge?"* Imaam Abu Hanifah responded: *"From the Companions of Umar(Radhiyallahu anhu) who acquired it from Umar(Radhiyallahu anhu), from the companinons of Ali(Radhiyallahu anhu) who acquired it from Ali (Radhiyallahu anhu)and from the companions of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu) who acquired it from*

Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu)." The Khalifah commented: *"Indeed you have acquired (Knowledge) from a powerful source."*

The Khalifah had instructed Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) to assume the post of the Chief Qaadhi. Imaam Abu Hanifah declined. He was therefore imprisoned and flogged a hundred lashes. Ultimately he passed away in prison. He was resolute in his refusal to accept the post of the Chief Qaadhi.

Imaam Abu Hanifah used to say: *"When there is a Hadith from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then we totally submit to it. Or we act according to the statements of some Sahaabah (i.e. in the absence of a Hadith), and we do not traverse beyond that. Or the statements of the Taabi-een with whom we debate."*

He used to pass the entire night in Salaat after initially spending half a night in Salaat. Once while Imaam Abu Hanifah was walking outside, someone pointed at him and commented: "He spends the entire night in ibaadat." Thereafter, Imaam Abu Hanifah would pass the entire night in Salaat. He said in this regard: *"I am ashamed of being praised for an ibaadat which is not in me."*

In a dream, Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) while inside the Ka'bah, heard a Voice saying: "O Aba Hanifah! You have acquitted yourself with sincerity in My service, and you have beautifully recognized Me. Verily, you have been forgiven."

Among the Students of Imaam Abu Hanifah were illustrious senior Mashaaikh and Aimmah Mujtahideen such as the great illustrious Imaam Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak, Imaam Al-Laith Bin Sa'd, Imaam Maalik Bin Anas, Imaam Mis-ar Bin Kidaam, Imaam Zufar, Imaam Abu Yusuf, Imaam Muhammad and others.

When Imaam Abu Hanifah declined to accept the position of the Qadhi and also the keys of the Baitul Maal, he was subjected to the severest physical punishment and torture. However, he accepted and tolerated these worldly hardships and gave precedence to it over the punishment of the Aakhirah. In view of this noble attitude, Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak commented: *"You speak about a man to whom the world with its treasures was present, but he fled from it"*

The Khalifah sent with Hasan Bin Al-Quhtabah a gift of 10,000 dirhams. Discretion dictated that he should not decline the gift (for the Khalifah would construe it an insult). Imaam Abu Hanifah instructed his son to return the 10,000 dirhams to Hasan after his (Imaam Abu Hanifah's) burial. After Imaam Abu Hanifah's demise, Hamaad, his son, returned the gift to Hasan who then commentd: "May Allah have mercy on your father. Indeed, he was most covetous on his Deen."

When Imaam Abu Hanifah's father, Thaabit, was a little boy, his father, (i.e. Imaam Abu Hanifah's grand father) took him to Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallahu anhu) who made dua of barkat for him. Thus, the Knowledge and Piety that

have been bestowed to Imaam Abu Hanifah were the effects of the Dua of Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallahu anhu).

He did not benefit even from the shade of the wall of his debtor, for this was tantamount to accepting a gift from a debtor which is morally/spiritually also in the category of *riba*. His extremely lofty degree of *Wara'* constrained him to give in *Sadqah* the entire amount of the sales of a day because his worker had not declared to the customer a defect in a bale of cloth. Since the whereabouts of the customer were unknown, Imaam Abu Hanifah gave as *Sadqah* the entire amount of the sales of that day.

The greatness of his piety (*Wara'*) is conspicuous from his abstention of consuming meat for seven years. Someone's goat in Kufah was lost and could not be found. He enquired as to the life-span of a goat. He was informed that a goat can live up to seven years. Hence, Imaam Abu Hanifah abstained from eating meat for seven years fearing that the meat which he consumes may be contaminated by the meat of the lost goat. Consuming *mushtabah* and *haraam* produces *zulmat* (spiritual darkness) in the heart.

What has been narrated of the virtues of the *Wara'* of Imaam Abu Hanifah is merely a drop of a shoreless ocean. He performed *Fajr Salaat* with the *Wudhu* of *Isha* for forty years. During the month of *Ramadhaan* he would make *khatam* of 60 *Qur'aan* – one during the day, and one during the night.

What has been mentioned thus far is a brief summary from *Ihyaaul Uloom* of Imaam Ghazaali. This exonerates Imaam Ghazaali (Rahmatullah alayh) from the falsehood of bigotry and hatred for Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh), which have been falsely attributed to him (i.e. to Imaam Ghazaali).

Guided One! If you intend salvation in the Aakhirah and safety from the danger of criticizing any of the Auliya of Allah and the Heirs of Nabi Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then it is incumbent that you believe that everyone among the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen and the Ulama-e-Aamileen (i.e. the Ulama who practise the Deen) is on the path of guidance from Allah Ta'ala, and that all of them are rewarded in all their states. This is the unanimous view of all the Ulama.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) narrated a Hadith Qudsi in which Allah Azza Wa Jal says: *"I declare war on him who distresses my Wali."* Without any doubt, the Ulama-e-Aamileen of the Muslimeen, all of them, are the Auliya of Allah Ta'ala.

The glad tidings of Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) regarding Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh)

Among the most conspicuous and best narrations in this regard is what has been narrated by Bukhaari and Muslim from Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu), and by Abu Nuaim from Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu). And by Shiraazi and Tabaraani from Qais Bin Sa'd Bin Ubaadah, and by Tabaraani from Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu). In these narrations Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

said: *“If Ilm was suspended by Thurayya (the planet Venus), then men from the sons of the Persians would acquire it.”* This Hadith is narrated with slightly different versions by the Aimmah of Hadith.

Al-Haafiz Al-Muhaqqiq Al-Jalaalus Suyuti said: *“This narration is Saheeh (authentic). It is reliable regarding the glad tidings about Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh), and it attests to his perfect excellence.* Some of the Students of Imaam Jalaaluddin Suyuti averred that what their Shaikh had categorically stated about Abu Hanifah on the basis of the Hadith is quite obvious. Therein is no doubt because no one from the Persians during his era had attained the heights of his Knowledge nor the heights of the Knowledge of his Companions.

Jalaaluddin As-Suyuti said that in view of this Hadith whose authenticity is unanimous, there is no need for the *maudhoo'* narrations pertaining to Imaam Abu Hanifah. Another narration which highlights the lofty stature of Abu Hanifah is the Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam): *“The Beauty of the world will depart in the year 150.”* Shamsul Aimmah Al-Kardawi said that this Hadith applies to Abu Hanifah, for he had died in that year.

Imaam Abu Hanifah was a Taabi'ee

According to Ath-Thahabi, Imam Abu Hanifah had met Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (Radhiyallahu anhu) during his childhood. Imaam Abu Hanifah said: *“I saw him several times with his beard dyed red.”* In Fataawa of Shaikhul Islam Ibn Hajar is mentioned that Imaam Abu Hanifa had

met a group of Sahaabah who were in Kufah after his birth in the year 80 hijri.

Besides Hadhrat Anas (Radhiyallahu anhu), he had heard narrations from a Jamaa't of Sahaabah among whom were Amr Bin Huraith, Abdullah Bin Unais Al-Juhani, Abdullah Bin Haarith Bin Jaz'i Zubaidi, Jaabir Bin Abdullah, Abdullah Bin Aufa, Waathilah Ibnul Asqa', Ma'qil Bin Yasaar, Abu Tufail Aamir Bin Waathilah, Aishah Bint Ajrad, Sahl Bin Sa'd, Saa-ib Bin Khallaad Bin Suwaid, Saa-ib Bin Yazeed Bin Saeed, Abdullah Bin Busrah, Mahmood Bin Ar-Rabee', Abdullah Bin Ja'far and Abu Umaamah (Radhiyallahu anhum)

Although arguments have been presented to refute the authenticity of the narrations of Imaam Abu Hanifah from Sahaabah, there are likewise counter arguments of authorities to confirm the veracity of Imaam Abu Hanifah being a Taabi'ee, and having heard Ahaadith from Sahaabah.

The accusation of Raai' (opinion)

It should not be construed from the appellation, *As-haabur Raai'*, which the Ulama have designated to Imaam Abu Hanifah and his Companions that their intention was to denigrate him or to convey the idea that they would give preference to their opinion over the Ahaadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and his Sahaabah. Imaam Abu Hanifah and his Companions are free from this allegation.

According to numerous narrations, Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) had clarified that the first source is

the Qur'aan, then the Sunnah, then the statements of the Sahaabah, and he would not emerge from these confines. If there was no directive in these sources, then only would he resort to Ijtihaad. Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"If in an issue there was a Saheeh Hadith, he (Abu Hanifah) would adopt it. Similarly if there was an authentic narration from the Sahaabah or Taabi'een, he would act similarly. In the absence of these sources would he resort to Qiyaas."*

Hadhrat Ibnul Mubaarak (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"It is indeed surprising that people say that he (Abu Hanifah) would issue fatwa on the basis of opinion. He would issue fatwa only on the basis of narration."* He also narrated that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"It is not proper for anyone to resort to opinion with the Kitaab of Allah Ta'ala, nor with the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), nor with the consensus of the Sahaabah. Regarding the differences among the Sahaabah, we adopt the version which is closest to the Kitaab of Allah Ta'ala or to the Sunnah, and we apply Ijtihaad in this regard. Whatever is beyond this (i.e. these sources), then comes Ijtihaad with opinion for him who is aware of the differences, and he then utilizes Qiyaas."* This was the methodology of Imaam Abu Hanifah and his Companions.

Imaam Al-Muzani (Rahmatullah alayh) who was the highest ranking Student of Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh), abundantly studied the works of Imaam Abu Hanifa's Companions. This attitude of Al-Muzani constrained Imaam Tahaawi (Rahmatullah alayh), who

was the nephew to Al-Muzani, to abandon the Shaafi' Math-hab in favour of the adoption of the Hanafi Math-hab.

Al-Hasan Ibn Saalih said that Imaam Abu Hanifah's research in *Naasikh* and *Mansookh* was profound. He was an expert in the Hadith of the People of Kufah, and a meticulous scrutinizer of the narrations reaching him.

Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) would say: *"We do not compel anyone to accept our opinion nor do we say that it is incumbent to accept it. Whoever has anything better than it (i.e. our opinion) should come forward with it, for we shall accept it."*

Ibn Hazam stated that there is consensus of all the As-haab of Abu Hanifah that his Math-hab is that even Dhaeef Hadith has precedence over Qiyaas.

The illustrious Imaam Al-A'mash had requested Imaam Abu Hanifah to write for him the masaa-il of Hajj, and he would say: *"Write the Manaasik (Hajj Masaa-il) from him. I do not know anyone who has more knowledge than him regarding the Faraaidh and Nafl of the Manaasik."* This is indeed a glowing testification for the integrity of Imaam Abu Hanifah by an Imaam of the calibre of Al-A'mash.

Among the distinctions of Abu Hanifah is that he used to issue fatwa during the era of the Taabi-een.

A man said to Imaam Wakee' (Rahmatullah alayh) who was the Ustaadh of Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh)

that Imaam Abu Hanifah had erred. Wakee' severely reprimanded the man and said: *"He who says so, is like cattle or more astray. How could he have erred when there are by him Aimmah of Fiqh such as Abu Yusuf and Muhammad, and Aimmah of Hadith, and Aimmah of Lughat, and Aimmah of Wara' (Piety) such as Fudhail Daawood Taai', etc.? (Imaam Wakee' enumerated the names of these experts who were the Companions – Students - of Abu Hanifah). He who has Companions of such calibre as these experts does not err. If he errs, his Companions upholding the Haqq will refute it (the error)."*

Another distinction is that Imaam Abu Hanifah was the very first to codify the Ilm of Fiqh and compile it systematically into chapters in the style we have it today. In fact, Imaam Maalik (Rahmatullah alayh) adopted Imaam Abu Hanifah's methodology of compilation in his Muwatta. Those before him (Abu Hanifah) had relied on their memories. Imaam Abu Hanifah was the first one who had compiled Kitaabul Faraaidh (Inheritance) and Kitaabus Shuroot.

THE BESTOWAL OF ACCOLADES

When Imaam Shaafi' asked Imaam Maalik for his opinion about Imaam Abu Hanifah, he responded: *"Subhaanallaah! I have not seen the likes of him. By Allah! If he says that this pillar is of gold, he will be able to substantiate it with daleel(proof) from qiyaas."*

Ibnul Mubaarak narrated that once Imaam Maalik said to his companions: *"Verily, he (Abu Hanifah) has been*

imbued with Fiqh to the degree that there is no difficulty for him in it." Imaam Maalik also glowingly spoke of Imaam Abu Hanifah's Fiqh and Wara' to Sufyaan Thauri.

Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *"Whoever contemplates tabahhur (an all-embracing panoptic view) on Fiqh, he is of the children of Abu Hanifah, for verily, he (Abu Hanifah) has been given the taufeeq (by Allah Ta'ala) of Fiqh."* This is the narration according to Hurmalah. According to the narration of Ar-Rabee', Imaam Shaafi' said: *"In Fiqh the people are the children of Abu Hanifah. I am not aware of anyone who has greater knowledge of Fiqh than him."* Imaam Shaafi' also said: *"Whoever does not study his Kutub, will not acquire tabahhur in Ilm nor in Fiqh."*

Ibn Uyainah said: *"My eyes have not seen the likes of him (Abu Hanifah)."* He also said: *"Whoever intends (to acquire) Fiqh, then it is Kufah, and he should cling to the As-haab of Abu Hanifah."*

Ibnul Mubaarak said: *"He was the most knowledgeable in Fiqh. I have not seen anyone more knowledgeable in Fiqh than him."*

"If there is a need for opinion, then it is the opinion of Maalik, Sufyaan and Abu Hanifah. Of them, Abu Hanifah was most knowledgeable in Fiqh and the most sagacious."

Ibnul Mubaarak when narrating, would say: *"An-Nu'maan Bin Thaabit narrated to me."* It was then said to him: *"To whom are you referring?"* He said: *"Abu*

Hanifah is the core of Ilm.” Some who were present, did not write this statement (in the notes they were taking from Ibnul Mubaarak). Observing this, he (Ibnul Mubaarak) remained silent for a while. Then he said: “*O people! How vile are your manners and your ignorance about the Aimmah! How little is your recognition of Ilm and of its Bearers! No one is more deserving than Abu Hanifah to be followed in Ilm. Know, verily, he is a Muttaqi Imaam, an Aalim of Wara’. He is a Faqeeh who has opened up Knowledge which no one has hitherto opened up with profound insight, sagacity and piety.*” Then Ibnul Mubaarak took an oath that he would not narrate to them (Hadith) for a month.” This was his severe reprimand for the disrespect which some had shown for Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh).

Imaam Thauri said to a man who said that he had come from Abu Hanifah: “*You have come from one who is the most knowledgeable in Fiqh on earth.*” Someone said to Imaam Thauri that *Kitaabur Rahn* of Imaam Abu Hanifah was seen by him (i.e. by Imaam Thauri). This person in surprise asked: “*Do you study his kutub?*” Imaam Thauri said: “*I wish I had all his kutub to enable me to study them. He left no need for further elaboration of Knowledge, but we are not just to him.*”

Imam Abu Yusuf (Rahmatullah alayh) said: “*Ath-Thauri followed Abu Hanifah more than me.*”

One day while describing Imaam Abu Hanifah to Ibnul Mubaarak, he said: “*Wallaah! He (Abu Hanifah) held on powerfully to Ilm. He was a defender (of the Deen)*

especially against prohibitions. He followed the Ulama of his city. He accepted only that which was authentically narrated from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He had profound insight regarding the Naasikh and Mansookh Ahaadith. He would search for the Ahaadith from Thiqaat (authentic narrators), and for the final acts of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He would adopt as his Deen what he acquired from the Ulama of Kufah in following the Haqq."

Imaam Al-Auzaai' said to Ibnul Mubaarak: *"Who is this mu'tadi' (bid'ati) who has appeared in Kufah who is known as Abu Hanifah?"* Ibnul Mubaarak then showed Imaam Auzaai' some extremely intricate masaa-il of Imaam Abu Hanifah. The masaa-il in the manuscript were attributed to An-Nu'maan Bin Thaabit. Imaam Auzaai' asked: *"Who is he (i.e. An-Nu'maan)?"*

Ibnul Mubaarak said: *"A Shaikh whom I met in Iraq."*
 Imaam Auzaai' said: *"He is an outstanding expert among the Mashaikh. Go and gain more from him"*
 Ibnul Mubaarak said:
"He is Abu Hanifah, the one from whose (association) you forbid."

When Imaam Auzaai' met Imaam Abu Hanifah during Hajj, he discussed the Masaa-il with him. Imaam Abu Hanifah presented greater elaboration of the Masaa-il than what Ibnul Mubaarak had recorded from him (i.e. from Imaam Abu Hanifah). Afterwards, Auzaai' said to Ibnul Mubaarak: *"I envy the man for his abundance of Knowledge and depth of intelligence. I seek forgiveness*

from Allah Ta'ala. Certainly I was in error manifest. Cling to the man, for verily, he is the opposite of what has reached me (about him)."

Ibn Juraij said: *"When information of his (Abu Hanifah's) Knowledge, profound piety and rectitude of Deen reached me, I understood that soon he will have an elevated and a wonderful rank in Knowledge."* One day someone spoke disparagingly of Imaam Abu Hanifah, Ibn Juraij said: *"Shut up! Verily, he is a Faqeeh! Verily he is a Faqeeh! Verily he is Faqeeh!"*

Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (Rahmatullah alayh) said about Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh): *"He is from the People of Wara' and Zuhd. His preference for the Aakhirah is such that no one has attained it. He was flogged by the orders of the Khalifah Mansoor for refusing to accept the post of the Qaadhi. May Allah's mercy and pleasure be with him."*

Abdullah Bin Daawood Al-Khuraibi said: *"It is incumbent on the People of Islam to supplicate for Abu Hanifah for he has protected for them the Sunnah and Fiqh. Regarding him people are haasid (jealous) and jaahil (ignorant). But he is the best of them."*

"Whoever wishes to emerge from that blindness and ignorance, and to perceive the sweetness of Fiqh, should study his kutub."

Yahya Bin Saeed Al-Qataan said: *"I have not heard of any opinion more beautiful than that of Abu Hanifah."*

Mis'ar Bin Kidaam said: *"Whoever places Abu Hanifah between himself and Allah, I have the hope that he shall not fear nor will he be deficient with regard to caution."* It was said to Mis'ar: *"Why have you abandoned the opinion of your companions and adopted his (Abu Hanifah's) opinion (Math-hab)?"* He responded: *"Because of its correctness. Bring for me something better so that I may turn away from him and adopt it."*

Isaa Bin Yoonus said: *"Do not believe anyone who speaks ill of him. Wallaah! I have not seen anyone nobler and more knowledgeable in Fiqh than him."*

Ma'mar said: *"I did not see anyone who could express himself with greater profundity in Fiqh and in elaboration of Hadith than Abu Hanifah. There is absolutely no fear that he would interpolate into the Deen anything doubtful."*

Al-A'mash was asked a mas'alah. He responded: *"The answer for this can be given appropriately by An-Nu'maan Bin Thaabit. I am certain that barkat has been bestowed in his Knowledge."*

Yahya Bin Aadam asked: *"What do you people say about those who disparage Abu Hanifah?"* Then he himself said: *"He explains to them something which they understand and something which they do not understand. Hence, they are envious of him."*

Wakee' said: *"I have not seen anyone more knowledgeable in Fiqh and more beautiful in Salaat than him."*

Yahya Bin Ma-een said: *“There are four Fuqaha: Abu Hanifah, Sufyaan, Maalik and Auzaai’.* According to me, Fiqh is the Fiqh of Abu Hanifah, and this too is the view of the people (i.e. of the Ulama).” He (Yahya Bin Ma-een) was asked: *“Did Sufyaan narrate Hadith from Abu Hanifah?”* He said: *“Yes. He (Abu Hanifah) is Thiqah (authentic/reliable), and truthful in Fiqh and Hadith, and reliable in the Deen of Allah.”*

Ibnul Mubaarak said: *“I saw Hasan Bin Ammaarah holding the reins of Imam Abu Hanifah’s horse, and saying: ‘Wallaah! I have not seen anyone superior to you in elaborating in Fiqh, in eloquence, in patience and in swift response. Verily, in your era you are the leader of the Fuqaha. Those who disparage you, do so because of jealousy.’”*

Yahya Bin Ma-een was asked about Imaam Abu Hanifah. He said: *“He is Thiqah (reliable/authentic). I have not heard anyone saying that he is dhaeef (i.e. weak in Hadith). (Look!) this is Shu’bah who wrote to him to narrate Hadith, and he in fact, ordered him to do so. Ayyoob As-Sakhtiyaani praised him, saying that he is pious and a faqeeh. Someone disparaged Imaam Abu Hanifah in the presence of Ibn Aun. The critic said that he (Abu Hanifah) would present a view, then retract it the next day.’ Ibn Aun said: ‘This is the proof for his Wara’, for verily, he retracts error and adopts rectitude. If this was not so, he would have defended his stance.”*

Hammaad Bin Yazeed said: *“When Abu Hanifah would enter while we were with Amr Bin Dinaar, he would leave*

us and pay attention to Abu Hanifah. We would then ask him (Abu Hanifah), and he would narrate Hadith to us."

Haafiz Abdul Azeez Abu Rawwaad said: *"Whoever loves Abu Hanifah is a Sunni, and whoever has enmity for him is a muftadi' (bid'ati)."*

Khaarijah Bin Mus'ab said: *"Abu Hanifah among the Fuqaha is like the fulcrum of a millstone, and an expert who refines gold."*

Haafiz Muhammad Bin Maimoon said: *"During the era of Abu Hanifah no one had greater piety (Wara') than him. No one was a greater Zaahid nor a greater Faqeeh than him. Wallaah! A hundred thousand gold coins do not please me as much as hearing Hadith from Abu Hanifah."*

Ibraaheem Bin Muaawiyah Ad-Dhareer said: *"Of the completion of the Sunnah is love for Abu Hanifah. He spoke justly, he opened for people the avenue of Knowledge and provided solutions for problems."*

Asad Bin Hakeem said: *"It is only a jaahil or a muftadi' who will disparage Abu Hanifah."*

Abu Aasim said: *"Wallaah! He is a greater Faqeeh than Ibn Juraij. My eyes have not seen anyone with greater ability in Fiqh than him."*

Dawood Taai' said: *"He is a star from whom the night-traveller gains direction (in the darkness), and he is such Knowledge which the hearts of the Mu'mineen accept."*

Shareek Al-Qaadhi said: *“Abu Hanifah was a man of considerable silence and reflection. His gaze in Fiqh was profound. He was an expert of profound erudition in the deduction of masaa-il regarding knowledge, practice and debate. He would enrich a destitute. If the poor person acquired knowledge, he would say: ‘You have attained the greater wealth by recognition of halaal and haraam.’”*

Khalf Bin Ayyoob said: *“Ilm was transferred from Allah Ta’ala to Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and from him to his As-haab, then from them to the Taabi-een. Thereafter it was transferred to Abu Hanifah and his Companions. Now whoever wishes, may be pleased, and whoever wishes, may be displeased.”*

Someone asked an Imaam from the Aimmah: *“Why is it that when Abu Hanifah is mentioned, you praise him specifically, and not others when they are mentioned?”* The Imaam said: *‘Because his status is not like the status of others with regards to the benefits people derive from his knowledge.’*

These few accolades and praises mentioned here, are not exhaustive. There are many more praises lauded on Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) by the Aimmah. However, the few narrated here are adequate to enable a fair and just person to recognize the truth. Thus, Haafiz Abu Umar Yusuf Bin Abdul Barr Maaliki said:

“The Fuqaha do not pay any heed to those who disparage Imaam Abu Hanifah nor do they accept any criticism directed to him.”

Imam Mis'ar said: *"I have seen Abu Hanifah after Fajr Salaat sitting to teach people until Zuhr. After Zuhr he would resume teaching until just before Maghrib. After Maghrib, again he engaged in teaching until Isha'. I said to myself: 'When does this man engage in ibaadat. I shall certainly keep him under observation.*

After the people had dispersed, he washed and changed his clothes, then left for the Musjid where he remained in Salaat until Fajr. Then he emerged from the Musjid, changed his clothes and went for Fajr Salaat. Then he did as the previous day. I said to myself: 'He was fresh in his ibaadat. I shall certainly observe him again'.

He repeated the same performance, and I again observed him the third night. Then I resolved to remain with him until death overtakes me or until he dies. I never saw him eating during the day nor sleeping during the night. However, before Zuhr, he would take a light nap."

Imaam Mis'ar (Rahmatullah alayh) had passed away in Sajdah in the Musjid of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh).

Shareek said: *"I lived with him for a year, and I never saw him lying down."*

Khaarijah said: *"There were four persons who had completed the entire Qur'aan in one raka't inside the Ka'bah. One of them was Abu Hnifah."*

Fadhl Bin Dukain said: *:"I saw a whole Jamaa't of the Taabi-een and others, but I never saw anyone performing Salaat as Abu Hanifah. Before beginning Salaat, he*

would weep and make dua. He displayed profound fear. One night he repeated the Aayat:

بَلِ السَّاعَةِ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَذَى وَأَمْرٌ ﴿٤٦﴾

“In fact, the Hour (Qiyaamat) is their promised time, and the Hour is most catastrophic and most unpleasant.”

(Surah Qamar, Aayat 46)

the entire night in Salaat. On another occasion, he repeatedly recited

فَمَنْ لِّلّٰهِ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَيْنَا عَذَابَ السَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾

“Thus Allah has been benevolent to us and He has saved us from the chastisement of the burning hot wind.”

(Aayat 27 Surah Tur)

in Salaat until the Fajr Athaan.”

Ibn Abu Rawaad said: “In Makkah I did not find anyone so patient in Tawaaf, Salaat and issuing Fatwa. Day and night he was engrossed in the search for the Akhirah and Najaat. I observed him for ten nights. He did not sleep at all during the night. During the day he was occupied in Tawaaf, Salaat and Ta'leem.

When a mas'alah would become intractable, he would say: “This is because of a sin which I have committed. He would then repent. Frequently, he would make wudhu and perform two raka'ts Salaat and repent. The problem would then be solved, and he would comment: ‘I feel pleased and hope that I have been forgiven, hence the mas'alah has been solved.’ When this reached Fudhail Bin Iyaadh, he wept profusely and said: ‘May Allah have mercy on Abu

Hanifah. His attitude is because of the paucity of his sins. If it was someone else, he would not have understood because of the abundance of his sins."

Once Imaam Abu Hanifah accidentally stepped on the foot of a young boy. The boy spontaneously exclaimed: "*O Shaikh! Do you not fear the compensation of the Day of Qiyaamah?*" The impact of this statement on Imaam Abu Hanifah's heart was such that he fell down unconscious. When he regained consciousness, it was said to him: "*Why were you so much affected by the statement of that boy?*" He said: "*I fear that he was inspired (by Allah Ta'ala) to say so.*"

Someone observed Imaam Abu Hanifah and Imaam Ibnul Mu'tamir speaking in low tones in the Musjid. Then both wept profusely. After they emerged from the Musjid someone asked the reason for their weeping, Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "*We observed that during this age, the people of baatil have overwhelmed the people of virtue (the Ahl-e-Haqq), and this has reduced us to weeping.*"

The impression of his tears were visible in his eyes and on his cheeks. May Allah be pleased with him, and have mercy on him.

Once one of his detractors said to him: "*O Mu'tadi'! O Zindeeq!*". Imaam Abu Hanifah responded: "*May Allah forgive you. Allah knows me to be the opposite of what you have said. Since I have recognized Allah, I have not considered anyone to be His equal. I hope only for forgiveness from Him. I fear nothing except his*

punishment.” Then he wept profusely and became unconscious. When he regained consciousness, the man said: “Forgive me.” Imaam Abu Hanifah said: “Whoever disparages me in ignorance, he is forgiven. Whoever says something (i.e. baseless criticism) about me despite having knowledge, he is in a problem because gheebat of the Ulama remains after him (i.e. the effect and punishment will be enduring).”

Bukair Bin Ma’roof said: *“I did not find in the Ummah of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) anyone with such a beautiful character as Abu Hanifah.”*

Hasan Bin Saalih said: *“Abu Hanifah was exceptionally strict in Wara’, fleeing from haraam, abandoning much of halaal for fear of mushtabah. I did not see a Faqeeh guarding himself and his knowledge as much as him. His perpetual struggle was until his grave.”*

Yazeed Bin Haaroon said: *“I acquired knowledge from a thousand Mashaaikh, but I did not find anyone more pious and exercising more control over the tongue than Abu Hanifah.”*

Imaam Abu Hanifah said: *“If it was not for the fear of Knowledge being lost, I would not issue any fatwa for anyone. While others will benefit, I may incur sin.”*

Among our senior Shaafi’ Aimmah, namely, Ustaaz Abul Qaasim Al-Qushairi states in his Kitaab on the lives of the illustrious Sufia, in the section on Taqwa: *“Abu Hanifah would not sit in the shade of a tree belonging to his debtor,*

and he said: 'Every Qardh (loan given) which brings benefit is riba.'

Regarding this attitude of Taqwa, Imaam Abu Hanifah explained: *"I do not impose this on others. However, it is necessary for an Aalim to impose on himself more than that to which he calls people."*

Respect of the Ulama for Imaam Abu Hanifah

The Ulama and Fuqaha showed their utmost respect for Imaam Abu Hanifa (Rahmatullah alayh) even after his death just as they had honoured him whilst he was alive. The Aimmah and Ulama as well as the masses would visit the Grave of Imaam Abu Hanifah and through his medium (Waseelah) would make dua.

While Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh) was in Baghdad, he would frequently visit the Grave of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh). When he had a need, he would perform two raka'ts Salaat, then go to the Grave of Imaam Abu Hanifah. He, himself said: *"I would derive barkat from Abu Hanifah. When I had a need, I would perform two raka'ts and go to the Qabr of Abu Hanifah. I would supplicate to Allah Ta'ala by his graveside, and my need would be fulfilled."*

It is mentioned in the *Haashiyah of Minhaajun Nawawi* that Imaam Shaafi' once performed Fajr Salaat by the graveside of Imaam Abu Hanifah, and he omitted Qunoot. When he was asked to explain, he said: *"For the respect of the Companion of this Grave."* It has also been mentioned

that he had also abstained from reciting *Bismillaah* audibly.

Contrary to what some may opine, there is no objection in this attitude of Imaam Shaafi' because sometimes due to certain factors of importance, abstention from Sunnah is accorded preference. To project the superiority of the status of the Ulama is an essential objective. When there is a need to denigrate a *haasid* (*the envious one*) or to teach a *jaahil*, then this objective is superior to recitation of Qunoot and reciting Bismillaah audibly in view of the difference of opinion in these two acts, and no difference in the former (i.e. projecting the status of the Ulama). Furthermore, the benefit of this is greater than the restrictive benefit of the two acts.

Imaam Abu Hanifah had numerous *hussaad* (*those who harboured intense jealousy*) during his lifetime and even after his demise. They had gone to great lengths to level the worst slanders against Imaam Abu Hanifah, and they had connived in the conspiracy to murder him. In view of these circumstances, the action of Imaam Shaafi' in abstaining from Qunoot and *Bismillaah bil Jahr* is superior for emphasizing the respect and honour of this noble Imaam, and to register the fact that he was among the Aimmah of the Muslimeen who has to be followed. Honouring and respecting him are incumbent. The *haasideen* and disparagers, despite having had knowledge, were cast into deviation and loss by Allah Ta'ala.

When Ibnul Mubaarak stood at the graveside of Imaam Abu Hanifah, he said: "*May Allah have mercy on you.*"

Ibraaheem An-Nakh'i and Hammaad bin Sulaimaan died and left a Representative (i.e. Abu Hanifah). However, you have died without leaving a representative in this entire earth." Then he sobbed profusely.

At his graveside, Hasan Bin Ammaarah said: *"You (O Abu Hanifah!) were for us the Representative of those before you, but you did not leave a representative after you. If anyone does represent you in the Knowledge you have imparted, it is not possible for anyone to represent you in Wara' except with the Taufeeq of Allah Ta'ala."*

Azhar Bin Kaisaan said: *"In a dream I saw Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Abu Bakr (Radhiyallahu anhu) and Umar (Radhiyallah anhu) were behind him. I said: 'May I ask Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) something?' They said: 'Ask, but do not raise your voice.' Then I asked about the Knowledge of Abu Hanifah because I did not have confidence in him. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied: 'His knowledge is from the fountain of Khidhr's knowledge."*

Refutation of those who criticized Abu Hanifah

The detractors accuse Imaam Abu Hanifah of according preference to Qiyaas over the Sunnah. Haafiz Ibn Abdul Barr Maaliki said that the Muhadditheen had transgressed the limits in their criticism of Abu Hanifah accusing him of giving preference to Qiyaas over the Sunnah whereas the majority of the Ulama say that when there is a Saheeh Hadith, then opinion is negated. However, there are only a few such preferences of Imaam Abu Hanifah, and for which there are valid interpretations.

In the vast majority of his *qiyaasaat*, Imaam Abu Hanifah followed the Ulama of Kufah such as Ibraaheem Nakha'i and the Companions of Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu). Although Imaam Abu Hanifah had resorted to *Qiyaas* more than others, he is not exclusive in this field. Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (Radhiyallahu anhu) was asked: *"Why do you criticize Abu Hanifah?"* He replied: *'Because of opinion.'* It was said to him: *'Did Maalik not also employ opinion?'* Imaam Ahmad said: *'Yes, but Abu Hanifah employed opinion more than him.'* Then it was said to him: *'Why do you not criticize each one proportionately – this one with his share of opinion and that one with his share of opinion?'* Imaam Ahmad then remained silent.

Laith Bin Sa'd said: *"I enumerated 70 masaa-il which Maalik had based on opinion. All of them were in conflict with the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I wrote to him by way of admonition."*

The reality is that there is not a single one among the Ulama of the Ummah who had diverted from the Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) without a valid interpretation, e.g. *Nuskh* (abrogation) with another Hadith, or *Ijma'*, or weakness in the Sanad, etc. If anyone rejects a Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) without valid interpretation, his *adaalat* (integrity as a just and pious person) is negated and *fisq* is confirmed for him. Thus, it is not conceivable that any of the illustrious Aimmah had rejected a Saheeh Hadith on the basis of mere opinion. Even among the Sahaabah, *Raai'* (Opinion) is authentically confirmed. In brief, Imaam Abu Hanifah

was not exclusive in the employment of *qiyaas*. All the Fuqaha of all the lands of Islam have a share in this.

Some people have even accused Imaam Abu Hanifah of having been a *Mur'jiyah*. This too is blatant falsehood. The Shaarih of Al-Mawaaqif said that Assaan Al-Murji' used to attribute his teachings to Imaam Abu Hanifah in order to gain acceptance.

Another reason for this baseless attribution to Imaam Abu Hanifah, according to Al-Aamudi is that the Mu'tazilah during the first century referred to their opponents as Mur'jiyah. Whoever opposed them in the belief of Qadr, was labelled a Mur'jiyah by them. Furthermore, since it was Imaam Abu Hanifah's teaching that *Imaan neither increases nor decreases*, he was labelled a Mur'ji because according to the Mur'jiyah, *amal* is antecedent to Imaan. But, in reality this is not the case because in the sphere of *amal* Imaam Abu Hanifah is famous. He accorded great emphasis to *A'maal*.

It is also well known that Imaam Abu Hanifah had numerous detractors who always denigrated and disparaged him. They used to baselessly slander him with false attributions.

Imaam Ali Bin Al-Madeeni said: "*Thauri, Ibnul Mubaarak, Hammaad Bin Yazeed, Hishaam, Wakee' Abbaad Bin Awaam and Ja'far Bin Aun narrated from Abu Hanifah. They said that Abu Hanifah is Thiqah. Shu'bah too entertained a good opinion of Abu Hanifah.*"

Yahya Bin Ma-een said: 'Our Companions have committed excess regarding Abu Hanifah and his Companions.'

Shaikhul Islam At-Taaj As-Subki, in his *Tabqaat*, elaborates in considerable detail aspects of the science of *Jarah wa Ta'deel* (the expertise of investigating to establish unreliability or reliability and authenticity narrators of Hadith). In a nut shell, he explained that when those who praise and vouch for the integrity of one whose *Imaamate* and *Adaalat* are established facts, are more than his critics and detractors, and furthermore, there are factors of detraction such as *Ta-assub-e-Math-habi* (religious bigotry), etc., then their criticism should be totally ignored.

He further explains that the *jarah* (criticism) will not be accepted against one whose virtues are in excess of his deficiencies (errors and sins), and those who praise him and vouch for his integrity are more, and there are factors indicating bigotry or rivalry as is common between contemporaries. Thus, in this kind of scenario the criticism of Thauri and others against Abu Hanifah, and that of Ibn Abu Thi'm and others against Maalik, and of Ibn Ma-een against Shaafi', of Nasaai' against Ahmad Bin Saalih, etc. will be ignored.

At-Taaj Subki states that if *jarah* is accorded priority, then there will be no Imaam left untainted. Every great, illustrious one among the Aimmah will be blemished and will have to be discarded. There is not a single Imaam who has escaped the criticism of critics who had destroyed themselves by such unwarranted, bigoted indulgence.

Ibn Abdul Barr said:

“In this regard, numerous persons (Ulama, etc.) have blundered and deviated into ignorance, without understanding the notoriety committed by them. Criticism against the Aimmah whom the *Jamhoor* (*vast majority*) of the Ummah has accepted as Imaams, will not be accepted. The *daleel*(*proof*) for this is that even the Salaf had made statements of criticism against one another in anger. Such statements uttered in anger are given some interpretation and set aside.

Mutual criticism in the state of anger happened in abundance among the Sahaabah, Taa-bieen and Tab-e-Taabi'een. The Ulama ignored such criticism. After all, they (the Sahaabah and Taabi'een) were human. Sometimes they became angry and sometimes pleased. Now, whoever intends to accept the criticism of a Sahaabi against another Sahaabi or of a Taabi'ee against another Taabi'ee or of the Aimmah of the Ummah, against one another, will most certainly be destroyed and ruined in deviation and suffer manifest loss. If Allah Ta'ala guides someone, never shall he lapse into such deviation. What I have said here is the Haqq. Whatever is besides it is baatil.” (*End of Ibn Abdul Barr's statement*)

After mentioning the above, Ibn Abdul Barr narrated by way of example, the criticism of numerous critics against Imaam Maalik, and the criticism of Ibn Ma-een against Imaam Shaafi'.

Refutation of the Criticism of Imaam Abu Hanifah in the Compilation of Khateeb

In his voluminous compilation, *Taareekh Baghdad*, Al-Khateeb has compiled many vituperative narrations slandering Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh). In having compiled such narrations, it never was the intention of Khateeb to denigrate and disparage Imaam Abu Hanifah. He simply compiled all sorts of narrations available on the subject as is the practice of historians. In a chapter specially devoted to the praises of Imaam Abu Hanifah, Khateeb has compiled numerous authentic narrations in which are recorded glowing praise for Imaam Abu Hanifah. After having compiled the narrations of praise, he mentioned the disparaging narrations as well thereby showing that even such a great and illustrious Imaam as Abu Hanifah was not spared by the slanderers.

The narrations pertaining to vilification are so defective and obscure that even an ordinary Muslim may not be disparaged and slandered on the basis of such reports, leave alone denigrating and disparaging such a great Imaam as Abu Hanifah.

Commenting on the danger of the methodology of criticism of the Muhadditheen, Imaam Taqi Bin Daqeeq Al-Eed said: *“The honour of people is one of the pits of Jahannam. On the brink of this pit are the rulers and the Muhadditheen.”*

On the assumption that the narrations of vituperation compiled by Khateeb are authentic, then if the narrator is not Imaam Abu Hanifah's contemporary, he will merely be

following what the detractors and enemies of Imaam Abu Hanifah had said and fabricated. If the narrator happens to be a contemporary of Imaam Abu Hanifah, then too his narration is unacceptable in view of the principle that the criticism of a contemporary is not valid. Haafiz Thahabi and Ibn Hajar have stated this fact explicitly. Ath-Thahabi observed: *"I have not seen any age in which a contemporary is safe (from the criticism of contemporaries) except the ages of the Ambiya (Alayhimus salaam) and the Siddiqueen (Radhiyallahu anhum)."*

Allaamah Tajjuddeen Subki said: *"O Seeker of Guidance! It is incumbent upon you to adopt respect for the Aimmah of former times. Pay no heed to the mutual criticism of the one against the other, except if there is explicit evidence. Even then, if the criticism could be interpreted and a good opinion adopted, then do so, and overlook their mutual differences. You have not been created for this (i.e. for vilifying the Aimmah). Involve yourself in what is of benefit, and abstain from futility."*

The Seeker of Knowledge will remain on Rectitude as long as he does not delve into the mutual criticism of the Aimmah of former times, and abstains from passing judgment over them. Therefore beware of embroiling yourself in what had transpired between Abu Hanifah and Thauri, or between Maalik and Ibn Abi Zi'b, or between Ahmad Bin Saalih and Nasaai', or between Ahmad and Al-Haarith Bin Asad Al-Muhaasabi, etc., etc. , and also in (the later era) between Al-Izz Bin Abdus Salaam and Taqi Bin As-Salaah. If you become embroiled in this, I fear for you destruction. They all were great Aimmah. There is a

variety of interpretations for their statements which are frequently misunderstood.

Make dua that Allah Ta'ala becomes pleased with them all, and adopt silence regarding their mutual differences in the same way as we adopt silence regarding the mutual differences of the Sahaabah."

Refutation of the charge that Abu Hanifah baselessly rejects the authentic Ahaadith

Shaikh Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami Ash-Shaafi' says:

"The summary of the discussion of Haafiz Ibn Abdul Barr (Rahmatullah alayh) is that the People of Hadith have transgressed the limits in criticizing Abu Hanifah for giving preference to Qiyaas over narration. While the majority of the Ulama say that in the presence of a Saheeh Hadith, opinion is baatil (baseless and shunned), only a few such narrations are found (which have been set aside), and for this there is (valid) interpretation.

In the majority of Qiyaasaat others surpass him (Imaam Abu Hanifah) while others follow him. Furthermore, in most of his Qiyaasaat he followed the Ulama of his city such as Ibraaheem An-Nakha'i and the As-haab of Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu anhu)

Al-Laith Bin Sa'd said: 'I enumerated seventy masaa-il of Maalik Bin Anas which he based on his opinion and all of them are in conflict with the Sunnah. I wrote to him in this regard and admonished him."

We did not find any one from the Ulama of Islam who had established a Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then rejected it except with proof such as

Naskh (Abrogation) with a similar narration, or because of Ijma'.....

In fact, Ijtihaad with opinion and statements based on Qiyaas are attributed to even the Sahaabah and the Taabi'een. Numerous are the Taabi'een who had resorted to Qiyaas." (End of Ibn Abdul Barr's statement).

Thus, Imaam Abu Hanifah was not alone in the employment of Qiyaas. All the Fuqaha of the Lands of Islam resorted to Qiyaas. Ibn Abdul Barr has greatly elaborated on this topic in refutation of the ignoramuses who baselessly accuse Imaam Abu Hanifah.

Although this chapter is voluminous and difficult to embark on, here only a few brief principles shall be mentioned for the benefit of those who probe this subject.

Among the Mutaqaddimeen who had gained this erroneous impression were Sufyaan Thauri, and from the Muta-akhkhireen were Haafiz Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shaibah and the Shaikh of Bukhaari. The reason for them having gained this erroneous idea was their lackadaisical attitude. They had not reflected on the principles and rules of Imaam Abu Hanifah. In this regard, Haafiz Abu Amr Bin Abdul Barr and others said:

"Khabrul Waahid¹ is not accepted when it is in conflict with the principles on which there is Ijma' (Consensus). At

¹ Khabrul Waahid is a category of Hadith. It is of a lower class than Mutawaatir and Mash-shoor narrations. It is a Hadith narrated by a single narrator from a single source or from a group source, or the narration of a group from a single source.

this juncture Qiyaas has priority. Furthermore the accordence of priority to Qiyaas over Khabrul Waahid is constrained by a valid reason. It is not done carelessly or without reason. Either a Saheeh Hadith was not available to him or the Hadith was not Saheeh."

Imaam Abu Hanifah had said: *"If there was no Riwaayat, then I would decide with Qiyaas."* It is also well substantiated that Abu Hanifah said: *"We submit wholly to whatever has come from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)."* Ibn Hazam said that according to all the Companions of Abu Hanifah, his Math-hab was to accept even a Dha-eef Hadith and give it preference over opinion.

Among the many valid reasons for shelving *Khabrul Waahid* are:

- (1) The Sahaabi narrator's practical action is in conflict with his narration. Hence his practice is accorded preference to his narration.
- (2) *Umoomul Balwa*: Wide-scale prevalence constraining indulgence.
- (3) It is in conflict with Hadd or Kaffaarah which fall away with doubt.
- (4) *Qiyaas-e-Jali* is corroborated by another Hadith which is in conflict with the *Khabr*.
- (5) Criticism of the *Khabrul Waahid* by some Fuqaha of the Salaf.

(6) The differences of the Sahaabah regarding the Mas'alah.

(7) The *Khabr* is in conflict with the well-known Sunnah practice.

(8) The *Khabr* is in excess of the Qur'aan.

When one reflects on all these factors, it will be understood that what has been attributed to him in this regard is baseless. He did not abandon a *Khabr* without solid argument. In fact, Imaam Abu Hanifah accorded priority to Hadith Mursal² over and above Qiyaas. Numerous of the masaa-il of Abu Hanifah are in conflict with Qiyaas since he accorded preference to even Dhaeef and Mursal narrations. (*For example: laughter in Salaat breaks not only Salaat, but also Wudhu.*)

It should now be abundantly clear that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) has abstained from *Khabrul Aahaad* on the basis of sound principles and for cogent reasons. It is therefore incumbent to exercise extreme caution and not to lapse into the same error of deviation as others who had baselessly condemned this great, illustrious Imaam. Entertaining any corrupt opinion about this Imaam will ruin one's *A'maal* and one will join the ranks of all those who are losers in this world and the Aakhirat.

² Hadith Mursal is a Hadith from which a narrator has been deleted at the end of the Chain

The one who ventures to condemn Abu Hanifah will be confronted by unbearable calamity. Such a person will be ushered into such a desolate wilderness from which there shall be no salvation. Therefore make haste towards safety and walk along the path of salvation. Those who fail in this regard will be severely disgraced by Allah Ta'ala.

Numerous were those who had abortively striven to disparage and denigrate this great, illustrious and noble Imaam. They had endeavoured to belittle him among his contemporaries and among those thereafter. But all of them failed. No one can ruin the august reputatipon of one whom Allah Ta'ala has elevated and protected.

Allaamah As-Shaikh Shihaabuddin Bin Ahmad Al-Haitami As-Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh) states in the conclusion of his Kitaab, *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan fi Mana'iqibil Imaamil A'zam Abi Hanifah* (Rahmatullah alayh):

“.....They (the critics) had laboured to demote this great Hibr (Aalim) from his lofty pedestal, and to eliminate the love for him from the hearts of his contemporaries and for those thereafter. They laboured to prevent people from following and obeying him. But they failed in this endeavour. Their criticism in this regard had no value. And that is because the matter of Abu Hanifah pertains to a heavenly issue. All attempts and schemes against him had therefore failed. Whomever Allah Ta'ala has elevated and has bestowed to him from His Treasures, no one has the power to demote him from that lofty status.

May Allah Ta'ala make us among those who accept and observe the rights of the Aimmah of the Muslimeen, and may He save us from indulging in their denigration and disparagement. He (Abu Hanifah) had with him the aid and focus of Allah Ta'ala. The critic is deprived of taufeeq. His bigotry has deposited him in a deep abyss of ruin. The baseless opinion and the enmity of the one on whom is the Wrath (of Allah Ta'ala) and who has wandered far from the status of justice and honour was not feared by the Beacons in the darkness and the Stars in the Heavens (i.e. the Aimmah of the Muslimeen)."

(End of extracts from Al-Khairul Hisaan of Allaamah Al-Haitami Ibn Hajar As-Shaafi')

IMAAM ABU HANIFAH WAS A TAABI'EE

A Taabi'ee is a Muslim who saw any of the Sahaabah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The denigrators are at pains to prove that Imaam Abu Hanifah never saw any Sahaabih. However, the facts belie this contention.

According to Ath-Thahabi who was not a Hanafi, it has been authentically narrated that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh), during his childhood, had seen Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (Radhiyallahu anhu). In one narration, Imaam Abu Hanifah himself said: *"I saw him several times whilst he had applied red dye (to his beard)."* According to the majority of the Muhadditheen, a person who had seen any Sahaabi is a Taabi'ee even if he had not been in his companionship. Imaam Nawawi has corroborated this view.

There are several chains of narrations which assert that Imaam Abu Hanifah had narrated three Ahaadith from Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (Radhiyallahu anhu). Imaam Al-Baihaqi says in his *Al-Mudkhal* that Hadhrat Anas (Radhiyallahu anhu) had lived for many many years after Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). His teachings spread all over and also in Iraq. Ibn Sa'd, Ad-Daar Qutni, Abu Nuaim Al-Isfahaani, Ibn Abdul Barr, Al-Khateeb, Ibnul Jauzi, As-Sam'aani, Abdul Ghani Maqdisi, Fadhiullaah At-Toorbushti, Nawawi, Al-Yaafi-ee, Ath-Thahabi, Az-Zainul Iraqi, Al-Waliyyul Iraqi, Ibnul Wazeer, Badruddin Al-Aini and Ibn Hajar in his *Fataawa* also confirm that Imaam Abu Hanifah had seen Hadhrat Anas (Radhiyallahu anhu).

As-Suyuti has also narrated this in *Tabyeedhus Saheefah*, and so have Ash-Shihaabul Qustulaani and Ibn Hajar Al-Makki, and others. Thus it is only due to either gross ignorance of all these explicit narrations or due to pride that the *Taabi'iyat* of Imaam Abu Hanifah is denied. Muslim and Ibn Hibbaan state that according to Al-A'mash, Imaam Abu Hanifah had seen Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (Radhiyallahu anhu). Musa Bin Abi Aishah regards him as a Tabi'ee for having seen Hadhrat Amr Bin Huraith (Radhiyallahu anhu).

Although some Muhadditheen designate the three Ahaadith unauthentic, Abul Muayyid Al-Khawaarzimi narrates them in *Jaamiul Masaaneed*. Al-Muwaffaq Al-Makki records them in *Al-Manaaqib*; As-Suyuti in

Tabyeeidhus Saheefah; As-Saalihi in *Uqoodul Jumaan*. The three Ahaadith which are popular are:

- (1) “The quest of Knowledge is compulsory on every Muslim.”
- (2) “The one who indicates to goodness, is like the one who practises it.”
- (3) “Verily Allah loves the call (cry) of the grief-stricken one.”

The first Hadith is recorded by Ibn Maajah in his *Sunan*, from Hadhrat Anas (Radhiyallahu anhu). Regarding this Hadith, Imaam Suyuti narrating it from Al-Jamaal Mizzi, says in *Tabyeeidhus Saheefah*: “*It is narrated via several chains. It reaches the status of Hasan. But, according to me, it has reached the status of Saheeh. I am aware of approximately fifty chains of narrations for this Hadith.. .. It is also narrated from Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood (Radhiyallahu anhu). It is also narrated from Abu Saeed, Ibn Abbaas and Husain Bin Ali (Radhiyallahu anhum) as Al-Haitami has mentioned in Majmauz Zawaaid.*”

The second and third Hadith have been narrated by Al-Bazzaaz. Al-Haithami records this in *Majmauz Zawaaid*. At-Tabaraani narrates the second Hadith from Sahal Bin Sa’d as mentioned in *Majmauz Zawaaid* immediately after the Hadith of Hadhrat Anas (Radhiyallahu anhu).

Emphasizing Imaam Abu Hanifa’s *Taabi’iyyat*, Ibn Hajar Al-Haitami states in his *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*: “*Thus, he is among the A’yaan of the Taabi’een who is included in*

Allah's statement (the Qur'aanic Aayat): '....And those (i.e. Taabi'een) who follow them (i.e. the Sahaabah) in righteousness. Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him. And, He (Allah) has prepared for them Gardens (in Jannat) beneath which flow rivers. Therein shall they dwell forever and forever. Indeed that is the great success.'

A group of Ulama has also stated in their writings that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) had met a whole Jamaa'at (group) of the Sahaabah. One among them was Hadhrat Amr Bin Huraith (Radhiyallahu anhu). However, it has been argued that he (this Sahaabi) had died in the year 85 Hijri whilst Imaam Abu Hanifah was born in the year 80, and the view that he (the Sahaabi) had died in the year 98 is not confirmed.

Firstly, it is the majority view that *Taabi'iyyat* is established for even a discerning 5 year old. Secondly, there is no certitude that Hadhrat Amr Bin Huraith (Radhiyallahu anhu) had in fact died in the year 85. Thirdly, there is no absolute certitude that Imaam Abu Hanifah was in fact born in the year 80. It is also claimed that he was born in the year 61 while another view is the year 70. On the basis of these two latter views, much of the differences pertaining to Imaam Abu Hanifah's meeting Sahaabah are eliminated.

The Author of *Ta'neebul Khateeb* mentions that according to Abu Nu-aim Al-Isfahaani, among the Sahaabah whom Imaam Abu Hanifah had met are Anas Bin Maalik, Abdullah bin Al-Haarith and Ibn Abi Aufaa. This is based on the view of Imaam Abu Hanifah having

born in the year 80. However, if the view of his birth in the year 61 or 70 as reported by Ibn Zawaad and Ibn Hibbaan, are considered, then the scope for having seen many Sahaabah widens substantially. In fact, Abul Qasim Ibn Abil Awaam, in his Kitaab, *Fadhaail-e-Abi Hanifah wa As-haabih*, has validated the wide scope even on the basis of the first, popular view, viz., the year 80 Hijri being the year of Imaam Abu Hanifah's birth.

Among the Sahaabah whom Imaam Abu Hanifah had met was Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Unais Al-Juhani (Radhiyallahu anhu). The objectors claim that this Sahaabi had died in the year 54 Hijri while Abu Hanifah was born in the year 80 Hijri. The response is that there were five Sahaabah by this name. It is therefore probable that the one whom Imaam Abu Hanifah had met was another one of the five who was still alive at that time. In refutation of this contention, the objectors say that besides Al- Juhani (Radhiyallahu anhum) who had died in the year 54, no other Sahaabi by the name Al- Juhani had entered Kufah where Imaam Anu Hanifah was.

In response, some authorities say that according to Imaam Abu Hanifah, himself, Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Unais Juhani (Radhiyallahu anhu), the Sahaabi of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had come to Kufah in the year 94 Hijri. Imaam Abu hanifah narrated the following Hadith from him: *"Your love for something makes you blind and deaf."*

Abu Daawood has recorded this very Hadith from Hadhrat Abu Dardaa' (Radhiyallahu anhu) *Marfoo-an*, i.e. with an

unbroken Chain of Transmission right until Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Abu Dawood, upon narrating this Hadith, maintained silence. He did not denigrate or find fault with it. Although others have dismissed this Hadith as unauthentic, for us the *Sukoot (Silence)* of Abu Dawood is adequate for its authenticity. Neither is this Hadith *Maudhoo' (a fabrication)*, nor is it beset with severe *Dhu'f (Weakness)*. In fact, its status is *Hasan*.

The Author of *Jaamiul Masaaneed* has narrated this Hadith with three Chains of Transmission from Abu Daawood At-Tiyaalisi, from Abu Hanifah, from Abdullah Bin Unais (Radhiyallahu Ta'ala anhu). Thus, the opposite view of the detractors is dismissed.

Another Sahaabi whom Imaam Abu Hanifah met was Abdullah Bin Al-Haarith Bin Jaz'i Az-zubaidi (Radhiyallahu anhu). In refutation of this claim, it is said that this Sahaabi died in the year 86 in Egypt where he had resided.

In another narration of Imaam Abu Hanifah, he mentions having met and sitting in the *Majlis* of Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Haarith (Radhiyallahu anhu) in Musjidul Haraam in Makkah. This narration has also been refuted and labelled unauthentic by the objectors. The Author of *Jaamiul Masaaneed* narrated the Hadith of Abdullah Bin Haarith (Radhiyallahu anhu) from the narrations of Imaam Abu Hanifah who said:

“I was born in the year 80 and I performed Hajj with my father in the year 96. I was 16 years old. When I entered Musjidul Haraam I saw a huge *Halqah* (gathering around

a person). I asked my father: “Whose Halqah is this?” My father said: ‘The *Halqah* of Abdullah Bin Jaz’i Az-Zubaidi, the Sahaabi of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).’

Then I went forward and heard him saying: ‘*I heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saying: ‘He who makes tafaqquh (reflects) in the Deen of Allah, Allah suffices for his problems, and Allah will provide his Rizq from an unexpected source.”*

Ibn Abdul Barr narrated this Hadith in his Kitaab, *Jaamiu Bayaanil Ilm wa Fadhlih* with his Sanad from Abu Yusuf. Then he (Ibn Abdul Barr) said: ‘Muhammad Bin Sa’d, the scribe of Al-Qaaqidi said: ‘Verily Abu Hanifah saw Anas Bin Maalik and Abdullah Bin Al-Haarith Jaz’i.’

Ibnul Imaad says in *Shazraatuz Zahab*: “Al-Haafiz Al-Aamiri mentions in his Kitaab, *Ar-Riyyadhul Mustataabah* that in this manner has Saalih Bin Salaah Al-Alaai’ summarized it. I am narrating from his writings that Imaam Abu Hanifah saw the Sahaabi, Abdullah Bin Al-Haarith Bin Jaz’i, and he had heard from him Rasulullah’s statement: ‘*Whoever makes tafaqquh in the Deen.....*’.

In *Al-Mudkhal* Baihqi says: “It is said that he (Abu Hanifah) met Abdullah Bin Al-Haarith Bin Jaz’i Az-Zubaidi and Anas Bin Maalik (Radhiyallahu anhum). These narrations affirm the fact that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) had met these Sahaabah.

Hadhrat Jaabir Bin Abdullah (Radhiyallahu anhu) was another Sahaabi whom Imaam Abu Hanifah had met. In

refutation of this contention, it is said that this Sahaabi had passed away in 79 Hijri before even the birth of Imaam Abu Hanifah and that the Hadith narrated is *Maudhoo'*. In response we say that this Hadith narrated by Imaam Abu Hanifah from Jaabir Bin Abdullah (Radhiyallahu anhu), is recorded in *Jaamiul Masaaneed*. The Author says: "*Al- Qaadhi Abu Bakr Muhammad Bin Abdul Baaqi narrated it in his Musnad, and also Al-Haafiz Husain Bin Muhammad Bin Khusru Al-Balkhi in his Musnad.*"

Among the Sahaabah whom Imaam Abu Hanifah met was Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abi Aufaa' (Radhiyallahu anhu). The objection raised in this regard is that he had died either in the year 85 or 87. This argument is putrid. It has already been dismissed earlier in the discussion on Amr Bin Huraith (Radhiyallahu anhu), *Taabi'yyat* is established for even a person of 5 and 7 years.

Imaam Abu Hanifah narrated from Hadhrat Bin Abi Aufaa' (Radhiyallahu anhu) the *Mutawaatir* Hadith: "*Whoever builds for the Sake of Allah a Musjid even if it is the size of a hen's nest, Allah will build for him a mansion in Jannat.*" According to some authorities, Imaam Abu Hanifah must have heard this Hadith when he was five or seven years old from the Sahaabi. This Hadith has been narrated by Imaam Bukhaari, Imaam Muslim and others in similar form with the same meaning. It is a Hadith narrated from numerous Sahaabah. The author of *Jaamiul Masaaneed* narrates it from Abu Hanifah from Abdullah Bin Abi Aufaa' (Radhiyallahu anhu) with four different *Asaaneed*.

Furthermore, Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abi Aufaa' passed away in Kufah in the year 87 Hijri when the age of Imaam Abu Hanifah was 7 years. According to Ibn Ulayyah who maintains that Imaam Abu Hanifah was born in the year 61 Hijri, he was 15 years when the Sahaabi had passed away. The Math-hab of the Muhadditheen is that the *Simaa'* (*Hearing*) of a five year old is reliable. Thus, there is no logical reason for denying the authenticity of the Hadith which Imaam Abu Hanifah narrates from Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abi Aufaa' (Radhiyallahu anhu).

Imaam Abu Hanifah had also met Hadhrat Waathilah Ibnul Asqa' (Radhiyallahu anhu) from whom he narrated two Ahaadeeth.

(1) *“Do not express joy over the misfortune of your brother, for perhaps Allah will save him and afflict you with it.”*

(2) *“Shun that which casts you into doubt for that which does not cast you into doubt.”*

Tirmizi has narrated the first Hadith with a different variation. He has designated the Hadith *Hasan*. The second Hadith has been narrated by a group of Sahaabah. The Aimmah of Hadith have authenticitated it. The objection raised is that this Sahaabi had died either in the year 83 or 84 Hijri. This objection is baseless. The response has already been presented twice above.

Another Sahaabi whom Imaam Abu Hanifah met was Hadhrat Ma'qil Bin Yasaar (Radhiyallahu anhu). The

objection against this claim is that this Sahaabi had died during the Khilaafat of Hadhrat Muaawiyah (Radhiyallah anhu) who had died in the year 67 or 70 Hijri. It should be remembered that according to one view Imaam Abu Hanifah was born in the year 61 Hijri. In terms of this view he was 6 years old at the time.

Also among the Sahaabah whom he had met was Hadhrat Abu Tufail Aamir Bin Waathilah. He died in the year 102 Hijri in Makkah. He was the last of the Sahaabah. There is no problem in accepting the validity of Imaam Abu Hanifah's meeting with this Sahaabi. In the year 96, Imaam Abu Hanifah went for Hajj with his father. There is no valid reason for refuting this fact.

Imaam Abu Hanifah had also met Hadhrat Aishah Bint Ajrad (Radhiyallahu anha). The objection lodged against this contention is that according to Ath-Thahabi and Ibn Hajar she was not a Sahaabiyyah, hence the Saheeh Hadith which Imaam Abu Hanifah narrates from her is *Mardood (Rejected)*. They label her '*majhool*' (*unknown*). Predicating her with *jahaalat* (i.e. *being an unknown entity*) is baseless. The great Muhaddith, Yahya Bin Ma-een who was also the Ustaadh of Imaam Bukhaari, enumerates Aishah Bin Ajrad among the Sahaabiyaat. While there is difference of opinion regarding her being a Sahaabiyah or among the Taabi'een, the fact is that she is well-known despite the baseless claims of her being *majhool*. It is established on the basis of the narration of Ibnul Atheer that Aishah Bint Ajrad (Radhiyallahu anha) was *Ma'roofah* (*well-known*).

The Hadith in question is: *“The majority of Allah’s armies on earth are locusts. Neither do I (i.e. Rasulullah – Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) eat them nor do I say that they are haraam.”* As-Suyuti says in *Tabyeedhus Saheefah*: *“The text of this Hadith is Saheeh. Abu Daawood narrated it from the Hadith of Salmaan. Adh-Dhiyaa’ authenticitated it in Al-Mukhtaarah.”*

Al-Haafiz Murtadha Az-Zabeedi narrating this Hadith said that Imaam Abu Hanifah narrated this Hadith from Aishah Bint Ajrad (Radhiyallahu anha). He adds: *“Abu Hanifah heard Aishah Bin Ajrad (Radhiyallahu anha) saying: ‘Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘The majority of Allah’s armies on earth are locusts. I neither eat them nor do I make them haraam.’ Zabeedi further says: “ Ibn Khusru narrated it. Imaam Abu Hanifah having heard it from Bint Ajrad is an established fact as mentioned by Ibn Abdul Barr in Jaamiul Bayaanil Ilm wa Fadhlihi, attributing it to Yahya Bin Ma-een.*

Ibnul Atheer says in *Usdul Ghaabah*: *“Yahya Bin Ma-een narrated that the Faqeeh, Abu Hanifah heard this Hadith from Aishah Bint Ajrad (Radhiyallahu anha). It has also been narrated via another chain: from Abu Hanifah from Uthmaan Bin Rashid, from Aishah Bint Ajrad (Radhiyallahu anha), from Ibn Abbaas (Radhiyallahu anhu).*

Other Sahaabah met by Imaam Abu Hanifah were Sahal Bin Sa’d (d.88 H), As-Saaib Bin Khallaad (d. 91), As-Saaib Bin Yazeed Bin Saeed (d. 94), Abdullah Bin Busr (d.96), Mahmood Bin Ar-Rabee’ (d. 99), etc.

Some baseless contentions

(1) Imaam Abu Hanifah did not hear any Hadith from any Sahaabi. In support of this contention it is said that the senior Companions (Students) of Imaam Abu Hanifah such as Abu Yusuf, Muhammad, Ibnul Mubaarak, Abdur Razzaaq and others did not narrate any such Hadith from him.

This claim is baseless. Yahya Bin Ma-een, the illustrious authority of Hadith and the Ustaadh of Imaam Bukhaari has substantiated that Imaam Abu Hanifah had heard a Hadith directly from Aishah Bint Ajrad (Radhiyallahu anha). Ibn Abdul Barr has substantiated Imaam Abu Hanifah's meeting with Abdullah Bin Jaz'i Az-Zubaidi (Radhiyallahu anhu), and him (Imaam Abu Hanifah) having heard a riwaayat from him. Similarly, Ibnul Imaad has substantiated this fact in *Shathraatuth Thahab*.

Other authorities have also substantiated Imaam Abu Hanifah's meeting other Sahaabah besides the abovementioned two. A group from the Muhaqqiqeen has substantiated Imaam Abu Hanifah's meeting with a Jamaa't of Sahaabah.

There is no gainsaying in the fact that Imaam Abu Hanifah did see some Sahaabah. All are agreed on this. How is it possible for a great Imaam such as Abu Hanifah to see Sahaabah, and not hasten to them to acquire Ahaadith from them? Clear evidence of his enthusiasm in this field is his meeting in Musjidul Haraam with the Sahaabi Abdullah Bin Al-Haarith Bin Jaz'i. When he saw this Sahaabi's majlis, he went through the crowd to be in close

proximity of the Sahaabi to listen to his bayaan. It is inconceivable that despite having met Sahaabah, he did not acquire Ahaadith from them. Thus the claim of those who concede Abu Hanifah's seeing Sahaabah, but not acquiring Ahaadith from them, is utterly baseless and illogic. While some Muhadditheen refute the fact of Imaam Abu Hanifah having met Sahaabah, his Companions substantiate that he did in fact meet Sahaabah.

Abu Ma'shar Abdul Kareem (d.478 Hijri) had compiled a book of the narrations of Imaam Abu Hanifah from Sahaabah. Imaam As-Suyuti has reproduced in his *Tabyeedhus Saheefah* Imaam Abu Hanifah's narrations from Abu Ma'shar's compilation.

The Fallacy of Imaam Abu Hanifah's Paucity of Hadith

It was never argued that Imaam Abu Hanifah had compiled hundreds of thousands of Ahaadith in the manner in which the later Muhadditheen had acquitted themselves. The age of Imaam Abu Hanifah was the codification and systematization of the Shariah. He as well as the other illustrious Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen of his era were preoccupied with the masaa-il and dalaa-il of Fiqh. The Ahaadith on which he based the masaa-il were impeccable in authenticity.

The Ahaadith of Imaam Abu Hanifah were substantially less than the narrations compiled by the Muhadditheen. The *Tareeqah* of the Aimmah Mujtahideen and Fuqaha of his era was not like the way of the later Muhadditheen.

The illustrious Students of Imaam Abu Hanifah had compiled in the format adopted by the Fuqaha the Ahaadith which they had heard from him.

Just as Hadhrat Abu Bakr (Radhiyallahu anhu) and Hadhrat Umar (Radhiyallahu anhu) had narrated few Ahaadith due to their preoccupation with the affairs of the Ummah, and just as Imaam Maalik (Rahmatullah alayh) and Imaam Shaaf'i (Rahmatullah alayh) displayed a marked paucity of Hadith narration, due to their preoccupation with the formulation of Fiqhi masaa-il, so too is the story with Imaam A'zam (Rahmatullah alayh). However, while the detractors and denigrators are silent about the display of Hadith paucity regarding the other noble authorities of the Shariah, they are most vociferous, malicious and slanderous in regard to Imaam Abu Hanifah's display of paucity.

This 'paucity' should not be construed as ignorance nor should it be hallucinated that the great Aimmah had structured their Fiqhi masaa-il on the basis of opinion. Far from this fallacy, Imaam Abu Hanifah as well as the other Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen provided their Hadith and Qur'aan substantiation for every mas'alah they had propounded. Qiyaas was utilized restrictively and subjected to *Usool (Principles)*. There was no haphazard rejection of Ahaadith for according preferentiality to Qiyaas.

The 'paucity' is a relative issue. Although the Aimmah were Muhadditheen in their own right and having the knowledge of thousands of Ahaadith, relative to the

compilations of the later Muhadditheen, it is said that the Aimmah Mujtahideen had displayed 'paucity' in this field.

Even morons can understand that a person whose gaze on the Kitaab of Allah and the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is not panoptic, can never be considered as an Imaam or a Faqeeh, least of all a Mujtahid Imaam. But the lofty status of Imaam Abu Hanifah is acknowledged by the authorities of all Math-habs. Great and prominent Fuqaha were his students. His erudition in his field was such that it prompted Imaam Shaafi' to say: *"In Fiqh, the people are the children of Abu Hanifah."* The 'people' in this context included the illustrious Mujtahideen of the first Islamic century as well.

Furthermore, Imaam Abu Hanifah was extremely meticulous in accepting the authenticity of Ahaadith. His acid criterion transcended the rules of the later Muhadditheen. Imaam Tahaawi narrates: *"Sulaimaan Bin Shuaib narrates that my father said: 'Abu Yusuf dictated to us (for us to write down): 'Abu Hanifah said: 'It is not proper for a man to narrate a Hadith except that at the time of narrating it, he remembers it just as he had heard it.'"* That is, he should be able to narrate it exactly as he had heard it. Thus, according to Abu Hanifah, *Riwaaya bil ma'na* (i.e. narrating the gist/meaning) was not permissible. This stringent criterion of Imaam Abu Hanifah is in conflict with the view of the Jamhoor Mufasssireen. According to them *Riwaaya bil ma'na* is permissible. Due to this very stringent principle, the narrations of Imaam Abu Hanifah are comparatively less.

However, there was no paucity of Ahaadith for structuring the masaa-il of Fiqh as the variety of the *Masaaneed* of Abu Hanifah confirms. Furthermore the *Asaaneed* of the Ahaadith on which Imaam Abu Hanifah deducted the masaa-il are all *golden* as is evident from the *Masaaneed*. Any one having expertise in this sphere can verify this fact from the many *Masaaneed* attributed to Imaam Abu Hanifah by numerous Muhadditheen and Fuqaha.

It is reliably reported that Imaam Abu Hanifah had approximately four thousand Shuyookh from who he narrated. Although Imaam Bukhaari (Rahmatullah alayh) had approximately ten thousand Shuyookh, it confers no superiority over Imaam Abu Hanifah. There is a vast difference in narration of Hadith and narration of Fiqhi Masaa-il. It is imperative for the narrator of Fiqh to be an Aalim and a Faqeeh, whereas the narrator of Hadith need be only a layman. It is for this reason that the narrators of Ahaadith were in such abundance.

Among the very senior Taabi-een Shuyookh of Imaam Abu Hanifah were:

- (1) Ataa' Ibn Abi Rabaah: He had met two hundred Sahaabah.
- (2) Aamir Sha'bi: About him Ath-Thahabi said that he was the most senior Shaikh of Imaam Abu Hanifah. He had met five hundred Sahaabah.
- (3) Simaak Bin Harb: He had met eighty Sahaabah.
- (4) Abu Ishaq Subai'ee: He had met thirty eight Sahaabah.
- (5) At-Taaos: He had met fifty Sahaabah.

- (6) Muhammad Bin Muslim Bin Shihaab Az-Zuhri: He narrated from a great number of Sahaabah.
- (7) Rabeeah Bin Abi Abdur Rahmaan: When he died, Imaam Maalik Bin Anas said: *"The sweetness of Fiqh has departed."*
- (8) Naafi' Maula Ibn Umar
- (9) Muhammad Bin Ali Bin Husain Al-Baaqir
- (10) Qataadah Bin Diaamah
- (11) Hishaam Bin Urwah
- (12) Yahya Bin Saeed Al-Ansaari about whom Abdur Rahmaan Al-Jumahi said: *"If it was not for Az-Zuhri and Yahya Bin Saeed Al-Ansaari, a great portion of the Sunnah would have disappeared."*

Besides the aforementioned very senior Taabi'een, there were numerous other Taabi'een Shuyookh of Imaam Abu Hanifah who had met many Sahaabah from whom they narrated.

Allaamah Abdul Wahhaab Sha'raani (Rahmatullah alayh), the illustrious Shaafi' authority, testifying to the Treasure of Ahaadith in Imaam Abu Hanifah's armoury, said in his Mizaan: *"The Ahaadith on which Imaam A'zam based his deductions (for Fiqhi masaa-il) are more than the Ahaadith of the other three Imaams (Maalik, Shaaf'i and Ahmad Hambal). This will be apparent to anyone who studies my Kitaab, Kashful Ghummah ilal Haadi li-Adilatihi lil Mathaahibil Ar-ba'ah."*
 (Sharh Musnad Abu Hanifah – Mulla Ali Qaari)

Allaamah Sha'raani's vindication of Imaam Abu Hanifah shall be presented in a later chapter, Insha-Allah.

The contention of paucity of Hadith or that Imaam Abu Hanifah was a 'yateem' (orphan) or a 'miskeen' (destitute) in Hadith is indeed the spurious and slanderous assertion of malicious and envious juhala. Imaam Abu Hanifah was the greatest of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen. Imaam Maalik, Imaam Shaafi' and innumerable Fuqaha of all Math-habs acknowledge the authority, erudition and greatness of Imaam Abu Hanifah. He used to issue Fatwa in an age in which flourished the greatest Fuqaha and Aimmah of the Taabi-een and Tab-e-Taabi'een.

The contention that this greatest Imaam of the Shariah built the structure of the Shariah on the basis of a couple of Ahaadith is ludicrous and an insult to intelligence. Only his malicious and envious detractors entertained and propagated such a fallacy.

Muhammad Bin Mahmood Al-Arabi Al-Khawaarzimi compiled fifteen *Masaaneed* (Hadith compilations) of the Ahaadith narrated by Imaam Abu Hanifah, in a Kitaab which he named *Jaamiu Masaaneedil Imaamil A'zam*. The fifteen *Masaaneed* enumerated hereunder, were compiled by illustrious experts (Muhadditheen) of Hadith.

(1) Musnad compiled by Imaam Haafiz Abu Abdullah Bin Muhammad Bin Ya'qoob Bin Al-Haarith –Al Haarithiyyul Bukhari well known as Abdullah Al-Ustaadh (d 348 Hijri).

(2) Musnad by Imaam Haafiz Abul Qasim Talhah Bin Muhammad Bin Ja'far (d 291 Hijri).

(3) Musnad by Imaam Haafiz Abul Husain Muhammad Bin Muzaffar Bin Musa Bin Eesa Bin Muhammad.

(4) Musnad by Imaam Haafiz Abu Nu'aim Ahmad Bin Abdullah Bin Ahmad Al-Isfahaani (d 336 Hijri).

(5) Musnad by Shaikh Imaam Abu Bakr Muhammad Bin Abdul Baaqi Ibn Muhammad Al-Ansaari (d 535 Hijri).

(6) Musnad by Haafiz Imaam Abu Ahmad Abdullah Bin Adi Al-Jurjaani. He was an expert in *Jarh wat Ta'deel*. (d 365 Hijri).

(7) Musnad which was narrated from him by Imaam Hasan Bin Ziyaad Al-Lu'lu'ee.

(8) Musnad by Imaam Haafiz Umar Bin Hasan Al-Ushnaani (d 339 Hijri).

(9) Musnad by Imaam Haafiz Abu Bakr Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Khaalid Bin Khali Al-Kalaa'ee.

(10) Musnad by Imaam Haafiz Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Husain Bin Muhammad Bin Khusru Al-Balkhi (d 522 Hijri).

(11) Musnad by Imaam Abu Yusuf Ya'qoob Bin Ibraaheem Al-Ansaari. He narrates directly from Imaam Abu Hanifah.

(12) Musnad by Imaam Muhammad Bin Hasan Ash-Shaibaani. He too narrated directly from Imaam Abu Hanifah.

(13) Musnad by Imaam Hammaad, the son of Imaam Abu Hanifah. He also narrates directly from Imaam Abu Hanifah.

(14) Musnad by Imaam Muhammad Bin Hasan. This Musnad is known as *Al-Aathaar*.

(15) Musnad by Imaam Haafiz Abul Qaasim Abdullah Bin Muhammad Bin Abil Awaam As-Saghadi (d 335 Hijri).

(Sharh Musnad Abi Hanifah- Mulla Ali Qaari)

Besides compilations of the above mentioned Muhadditheen and Fuqaha, there were other illustrious Muhadditheen and Fuqaha who had also compiled the Ahaadith of Imaam Abu Hanifah.

Haafiz Muhammad Bin Mukhlid Bin Hafs Dauri (d 331 Hijri) had acquired his knowledge of Hadith from Shuyookh such as Shaikh Ya'qoob Daurqi, Shaikh Zubair Bin Bakaar, Shaikh Hasan Bin Arfah and Imaam Muslim Bin Hajjaaj. Senior Huffaaz of Hadith such as Daar Qutni and Ibnul Muzaffar had acquired Hadith from him. He had compiled the Ahaadith narrated by Imaam Abu Hanifah.

Another Muhaddith who had also compiled Imaam Abu Hanifah's narrations is Shaikh Abul Abbaas Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Saeed Al-Kufi. He is known as Ibn

Uqdah. Describing him, Allaamah Ath-Thahabi states: *“Ibn Uqdah was the Haafiz (of Hadith) of the era and a Muhaddith like an ocean. The strength of memory and abundance of Hadith terminate in him. “*

He was among the Akaabir Huffaaz. Akaabir Huffaaz such as Abu Bakr Bin Al-Ja-aani, Abdullah Bin Adi, Tabaraani, Ibn Muzaffar, Daar Qutni and Ibn Shaaheen narrated Ahaadith from him. In his Musnad of Imaam Abu Hanifah he had compiled a thousand of Imaam A'zam's Ahaadith. He died in the year 332 Hijri.

Haafiz Abul Husain Muhammad Bin Al-Muzaffar (d 379 Hijri): Great Muhadditheen such as Daar Qutni, Ibn Shaaheen, Burqaani, and Abu Nu'aim Isfahaani were among his Students. Daar Qutni narrated from him thousands of Ahaadith. Haafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalaani states regarding him in his *Ta'jeelul Manfa'ah bi Zawaa'idir Rijaalil Aimmatil Arba'ah*: *“The Musnad of Abu Hanifah which he had compiled equals the Musnad of Abu Hanifah compiled by Haafiz Abu Bakr Bin Al-Muqri in which are only the Marfoo' Ahaadith of Imaam Abu Hanifah.”*

Haafiz Imaam Abu Bakr Muhammad Bin Ibraaheem Bin Ali Al-Khaazin popularly known as Haafiz Ibnul Muqri Isfahaani (d 381 Hijri) also compiled the Musnad of Imaam Abu Hanifah. According to Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalaani, the Musnad which he had compiled consisted of only the Marfoo' Ahaadith of Imaam Abu Hanifah.

Haafiz Abu Hafs Umar Bin Ahmad Bin Uthmaan Al-Baghdadi, known as Ibn Shaaheen (d 385), Abul Hasan Ali Bin Umar Bin Ahmad Bin Mahdi, known as Haafiz

Daar Qutni (also died in 385 Hijri), Haafiz Abul Fadhl Bin Taahir Bin Ali Al-Qudsi, known as Haafiz Bin Al-Qaisaraani (d 507 Hijri), Haafiz Ibn Asaakir (d 571 Hijri) whom Ath-Thahabi describes: “*Al-Imaam Alhaafizul Kabeer Muhaddithush Shaam Fakhrul Aimmah*, had also compiled the *Musaaneed* of Abu Hanifah.

These were all famous and great Muhadditheen who had understood the greatness of Imaam Abu Hanifah and the treasure of Ahaadith he had, hence they all compiled his *Musaaneed*.

Among the Muta-akh-khireen Muhadditheen was Muhaddith Eesa Al-Ja'fari Al-Maghribi (d 1080 Hijri). The Musnad of Imaam Abu Hanifah which he had compiled enjoys the loftiest status of authenticity. Despite almost a millennium between him and Imaam Abu Hanifah, the *Asaaneed* between him and Imaam Abu Hanifah all enjoy the quality of *Ittisaal*(continuity). Regarding this wonderful achievement, Shah Waliyullah (Rahmatullah alayh) says in his *Insaanul Ain fi Mashaaiikhil Haramain*:

“He (Muhaddith Eesa) had compiled such a Musnad of Imaam Abu Hanifah in which he narrated the Asaaneed with Ittisaal from himself to Imaam Abu Hanifah. This thoroughly debunks the claim of those who contend that today there is no longer Ittisaal in the Asaaneed of Hadith.”

Each one of the famous and illustrious Muhadditheen hitherto mentioned had prepared his own *Musnad of Abu Hanifah* with his own *Asaaneed*.

Qaadhi Qudhaat Muhaddith Abul Muayyid Muhammad Bin Mahmood Al-Khawaarzimi (d 655 Hijri) had attempted to make a compilation of fifteen *Musaaneed* of Imaam Abu Hanifah. In the introduction of his famous Compilation, *Jaamiu Musaaneed Abi Hanifah*, he states:

“In Shaam I heard some ignoramuses claiming that there is no Musnad of Imaam Abu Hanifah, and that he is the narrator of a couple Hadith. Honour of the Math-hab impelled me to compile 15 Musaaneed of Imaam Abu Hanifah which famous Ulama and Muhadditheen had compiled.”

The names of the 15 Muhadditheen who had compiled the *Musaaneed* have already been mentioned earlier from *Sharh Musnad Abi Hanifah* by Mullah Ali Qaari.

Muhaddith Khawaarzimi has classified the Hadith compilations of Imaam Hammad, Imaam Abu Yusuf and Imaam Muhammad also as *Musaaneed*. However, these three compilations which are Hadith narrations of Imaam Abu Hanifah are manuscripts of *Kitaabul Aathaar*. Furthermore, *Jaamiu Musaaneed* of Khawaarzimi is not a faithful reproduction of all the 15 *Musaaneed* he has enumerated in his introduction. In several aspects it is defective. *Jaamiu Masaaneed* contains approximately 2000 Ahaadith whereas the Ahaadith narrated by Imaam Abu Hanifah are approximately 4000. Nevertheless,

Jaamiu Musaaneed Abu Hanifah has gained considerable fame among the Muta-akh-khireen.

The Status of Musnad Abi Hanifah

Muhaddith Muhammad Bin Ja'fah Kitaani Al-Maaliki states in his *Ar-Risaalatul Mustatrafah li Bayaani Mash-hoori Kutubis Sunnatil Musharrafah* in which he presents a unique elaboration on the Sihaah Sittah, Musnad Abu Hanifah, Muwatta Maalik. Musnad Shaafi' and Musnad Ahmad, states:

“These Kutub of the Four Aimmah added to the six (Sihaah Sittah) are the ten Kutub which are the basis of Islam and on which is its Structure.”

Haafiz Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ali Bin Humzah Husaini Damishqi Ash-Shaafi' states in *At-Tazkirah bi Rijaalil Ash'rah* which discusses elaborately the Narrators of the ten Kutub:

“The Musnad of Shaafi' comprises of the Adillah (Evidences) on the basis of the narrations which are authentic according to him, and the same applies to the Musnad of Abu Hanifah.”

Allaamah Abdul Wahhaab Sha'raani Ash-Shaafi' states in his famous *Al-Meezaanul Kubra*:

“Every Hadith which we found in the three Musaaneed of Abu Hanifah is Saheeh.

Furthermore, all these *Musaaneed* are apart from Imaam Abu Hanifah's outstanding and famous Hadith compilation, *Kitaabul Aathaar*, by Imaam Muhammad (Rahmatullah alayh).

In the *Ta'leeqaat (Commentary)* on Al-Haithami Ibn Hajar's *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*, Shaikh Aashiq Ilaahi says:

“Imaam Abu Hanifah held an extremely elevated status in Hadith just as his lofty rank in Fiqh and Ijtihaad. He narrated Ahaadith from the most senior Taabi'een whose lofty integrity and reliability were established facts. Great experts in Hadith narrated Hadith from him. They are well-known in the Kutub of *Asmaaur Rijal*.

The claims of the bigoted enemies of Imaam Abu Hanifah are to be ignored. These detractors have not researched the Kutub of *Asmaaur Rijal*. They are ignorant of the praises and accolades which the senior Aimmah laud on Abu Hanifah. They do not even consider the fact that the very senior Muhadditheen would accept his statements and issue Fatwa thereon.

If Imaam Abu Hanifah's views were pure opinion and the fabrications of his nafs, then Wakee' Bin Al-Jarraah, Yahya Bin Saeed Al-Qattaan and others among the Muhadditheen would not have issued Fatwa on such basis. Yahya Bin Ma-een, the Imaam of *Jarah wa Ta'deel* was among the *Ghullaat Hanafis (i.e. extremists)*. About him, Ath-Thahabi says in his treatise, *Ma'rifatur Ruwaat Al-Mutakallam Feehim*: “Ibn Ma-een said: ‘I wrote with my own hands thousands of Ahaadeeth.’ Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal said: “Every Hadith which is not known to Ibn Ma-een is not a Hadith.” Al-Ijli said: “Allah Ta'ala did not create any one more aware of Hadith than Ibn Ma-een.”

If Imaam Abu Hanifah had lacked knowledge in Hadith, formulating Fiqh without Qur'aan and Sunnah, then an Imaam of this calibre (i.e. Yahya Bin Ma-een) would not have become his Muqallid.”

IMAM ABU HANIFAH AND THE SUNNAH

The detractors contend that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) gave preference to Qiyaas and opinion (Raai') over Ahaadith. This claim is ludicrous and fallacious. Just as the Muhadditheen have principles and criteria for accepting Ahaadith, so too does Imaam Abu Hanifah have criteria and principles. The following are the *Usool* of Imaam Abu Hanifah for the acceptance of narrations:

(1) The *Mursalaat* of *Thiqaat* (authentic narrators) are acceptable when there is no stronger *daleel* conflicting with it. *Ihtijaaj* (i.e. to use a narration for formulating a law) with *Mursal* was always an established practice since the very beginning. Ibn Hajar states: “*The total rejection of Mursal is a bid'ah which developed in the beginning of the second century.*”

(2) Viewing *Akhbaarul Aahaad* in the light of principles formulated by him..... When there is a conflict between *Khabrul Aahaad* and these principles, the principle will be adopted on the basis of it being the stronger *daleel*. The conflicting narration is then labelled *Shaaz*. In this method there is no conflict with a Saheeh narration.

(3) Scaling *Akhbaarul Aahaad* on the *Umumaat and Zawaahir* of the Qur'aan. When a *Khabr* is in conflict with the *Aam* or *Zaahir* of *Kitaabullaah*, the *Khabr* is set aside and *Kitaabullah* is adopted since this is the stronger of the two Evidences. When there is no such conflict, *Khabr Waahid* is adopted.

(4) *Khabrul Aahaad* should not be in conflict with *Sunnat Mash-hoorah* whether it be *Sunnat Fi'liyyah* or *Qauliyyah* for this is the stronger of the two Evidences.

(5) A *Khabr* should not be in conflict with another *Khabr* of the same status. In such a conflict, one of the two is given preference, and this preference is dependent on different factors.

(6) The *Raawi's (narrator's)* practise should not be in conflict with the *Khabr* he narrates, e.g. the Hadith of Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu) pertaining to washing a utensil seven times if a dog licks it. This narration has been set aside because it is in conflict with the Fatwa of Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu).

(7) Discarding superfluity (*Zaa-id*) as a precaution in the Deen of Allah.

(8) Discarding *Khabrul Aahad* on the basis of *Balwa (wide scale prevalence)* in such issues in which there is a dire need for all people.

(9) The *Khabrul Aahad* should not cause discardence of any of two different rulings issued by the Sahaabah.

(10) The narrator's memory remaining intact from the time of having heard the narration to the time of its delivery.

(11) *Khabrul Ahad* should not be in conflict with the popular practice of the Sahaabah and the Taabi'een.

It should be abundantly clear from the aforementioned *Usool* that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) did not haphazardly or without rhyme or reason or merely to placate opinion discard *Khabrul Aahaad* narrations. Such narrations were set aside on a principled basis – a basis which the illustrious Aimmah and Fuqaha did not refute. Only the juhala who had an emotional axe of malice and *hasad* to grind, criticized Imaam Abu Hanifah on this issue.

THE TALAAMIZAH (STUDENTS) OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

A barometer for gauging the status of a Shaikh / Faqeeh / Muhaddith is the calibre of those who acquired knowledge from him and narrated Hadith and Fiqh from him. In this regard, Imaam Abu Hanifah stands out as a glittering Star. While Imaam Abu Hanifah had acquired Hadith and Fiqh from over four thousand Shuyookh, his Talaamizah by far exceed this number – a number which the Authorities say cannot be enumerated.

His Talaamizah came from almost every country of the Islamic Empire. Muhammad Bin Yusuf As-Saalihi Ad-Damishqi mentions in his Kitaab, *Uqoodul Jumaan* that Imaam Abu Hanifah's Students hailed from Makkah,

Madinah, Damascus, Basrah, Waasit, Mousil, Algiers, Raqqah, Ramlah, Misr, Yemen, Yamaamah, Bahrain, Baghdad, Ahwaaz, Kirmaan, Isfahaan, Hulwaan, Hamdaan, Rai', Tunisia, Daamighaan, Tabristaan, Jurjaan, Nishapur, Sarkhas, Nisaa', Marw, Bukhaara, Samarkand, Tirmiz, Hiraat, Kohistaan, Khawaarzim, Sijistaan, Madaain, Misseesah, Hims and many other places from all over the Lands of Islam.

In *Uqoodul Jumaan* he says: *“It is not possible to encompass the number of those who had acquired (Knowledge) from Imaam Abu Hanifah.”*

Al-Haafiz Abu Muhammad Al-Haarithi said: *“Those who narrate from Abu Hanifah are more than those who narrate from Hakam Bin Utaibah, Ibn Abi Laila, Ibn Shubramah, Sufyaan Thauri, Shareek, Hasan Bin Saalih, Yahya Bin Saeed, Rabeeah Bin Abi Abdir Rahman, Maalik Bin Anas, Ayyoob Sakhtiyaani, Ibn Aun, Sulaiman At-Taimee, Hishaam Dastawaaee, Saeed Bin Uroobah, Ma'mar Bin Raashid, Ash-Shaafi', Ahmad (Bin Hambal), Ishaq and others besides these from among the Aimmah of Islam.”*

The list of his outstanding Talaamizah is indeed impressive and testifies for the lofty status of Imaam Abu Hanifah. Among the illustrious Muhadditheen and Fuqaha who acquired Knowledge and narrated Hadith and Fiqh from Imaam Abu Hanifah are:

Ibraaheem Bin Tuhmaan, Asbaat Bin Muhammad, Abdur Razzaaq, Hafs Ibn Abdur Rahman, Humzah Az-Zayyaat,

Zufar Bin Huzail, Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak, Sufyaan Thauri, Fadhl Bin Dukain, Wakee' Bin Al-Jarraah, Yazeed Bin Zurai', Yazeed Bin Haaron, Muaafi Bin Imraan, Abu Yusuf Al-Qaadhi, Muhammad Ibnul Hasan Ash-Shaibaani, Makki Bin Ibraaheem, Dhuhhaak Bin Mukhlid, Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Ansaari, etc., etc.

Imaam Bukhaari narrates in his Compilation 23 *Thulaathi Ahaadith* (i.e. Narrations with only three links in its Chain of Transmission). From these 23, twenty *Thulaathi Ahaadith* are in fact from the Talaamizah of Imaam Abu Hanifah or from their Talaamizah. Imaam Bukhaari acquired eleven from Makki Bin Ibraaheem; six from Dhuhhaaq Bin Mukhlid who is among the As-haab of Abu Hanifah. Three of the *Thulaathiyaat*, Imaam Bukhaari had acquired from Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Ansaari. According to Al-Khateeb, he (Muhammad Al-Ansaari) was from the Students of Imaam Zufar and Imaam Abu Yusuf.

By virtue of these great and innumerable Talaamizah, the Math-hab of Imaam Abu Hanifah spread to almost all the Lands of Islam. If it were not for all these noble Stars of Uloom who were his Students, Imaam Abu Hanifah's Math-hab would have remained in Kufah. The elevated status of a Shaikh is adequately borne out by the calibre and number of his Students of lofty status. Stating this fact, Imaam Shaafi' said about Al-Laith, the Imaam of Misr: "*Al-Laith is a greater Faqeeh than Maalik except that his Students did not stand with him, (i.e they did not disseminate his math-hab).*" (page 61 *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*)

WHAT IMAAM JALAALUDDIN AS-SUYUTI SAYS ABOUT IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

Imaam Jalaaluddin Bin Abi Bakr As-Suyuti (died 911 Hijri) was among the very senior Shaafi' Fuqaha of the later period. Imaam Suyuti (Rahmatullah alayh) wrote a Kitaab, *Tabyeedhus Saheefah bi Manaagib Abi Hanifah*, in which he vindicated the elevated status of Imaam A'zam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh).

Some severe criticism tantamount to slander has been levelled against Imaam Abu Hanifah allegedly by Imaam Al-Juwaini (Rahmatullah alayh) who was among the very senior Imaams of the Shaafi' Math-hab. Imaam Suyuti adequately responds to the criticism rebutting it as baseless.

In a nutshell, the alleged criticism of Imaam Juwaini is proffered in the following statement which appears in the kitaab, *Mugheethul Khalq* authored by Imaam Juwaini:

“Although the focus of Abu Hanifah is penetrating, it does not conform to the Usool. It is in conflict with the Usool and deviates from it. Most of his views are in conflict with the Qur’aan, the Sunnah, Aathaar and the Ijma’ of the Ummah as we have elucidated. And also in meanings (his views are in conflict).”

Responding to this calumny and firmly rebutting it, Imaam Suyuti who is also a Shaafi' authority of high rank, says in his *Tabyeedhus Saheefah*:

“Before delving into this argument, two factors should be considered:

- (1) That Imaam Al-Juwaini is not the author of this book (Mugheethul Khalq). This is overwhelmingly my opinion.*
- (2) Confirming the authorship of this book to Imaam Al-Juwaini and assigning the matter to Allah Ta’ala.*

For verily, there is Consensus that Imaam Abu Hanifah is among the Aimmah of the Muslimeen in view of his uprightness, integrity and the compliance of his Fatwa with the gracious Shariah. His Ijtahaadaat do not conflict with the spirit of the Nusoos.

Ma-aathallaah! (Allah forbid!) that Imaam Al-Juwaini would make these statements against Imaam Abu Hanifah. It is not possible that this rubbish (ghutha’) could emanate from such a great and illustrious Shaikh (i.e. Imaam Al-Juwaini). Which Usool did he not comply with? Verily his Usool were the Kitaab, the Sunnah, Ijma’ and Qiyaas.

The Ijma’ of the Ummah confirms that Abu Hanifah was an Aalim who resorted to (valid) analogical reasoning, and he would issue decrees according to what Allah has revealed. Thus, this is a baseless calumny against him.

If indeed the attribution of these statements to Imaam Al-Juwaini is correct, then the best is to adopt silence and to assign the matter to Allah Azza Wa Jal.”

Indeed it is not possible for an Imaam of the calibre of Imaam Al-Juwaini to have uttered the villainous and slanderous *ghutha’ (rubbish)* which has been attributed to him. How is it possible for such an august personality, a Muqallid of Imaam Shaafi’ (Rahmatullah alayhi) to have written such slanderous rubbish when he was fully aware

that in the introduction of his *Kitaabul Umm*, Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh) said:

"The Ulama are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh."

It is inconceivable that Imaam Al-Juwaini was not aware of Imaam Shaafi's *Kitaabul Umm*. And, likewise it is inconceivable that Imaam Al-Juwaini regarded Imaam Abu Hanifah to be a 'kaafir'. The blasphemy attributed to Imaam Abu Hanifah undoubtedly renders such an exponent a kaafir. The one who refutes or who is in flagrant conflict with the Qur'aan, the Sunnah and the Ijma' of the Ummah cannot be a Muslim. When there exists unanimity among the Ulama of Salafus Saaliheen on the elevated status of Imaam Abu Hanifah and on the fact that he was the greatest Mujtahid Imaam, and the very first one to systematize and codify the Shariah, then it is inconceivable that such an illustrious Imaam as Al-Juwaini would venture that Imaam Abu Hanifah is not even a Muslim. Precisely for this reason does Imaam Suyuti say that the villainous statements attributed to Imaam Al-Juwaini are a conglomeration of *ghutha'* – pure fabricated rubbish unbefitting even ignoramuses, except those who have malicious tendencies and villainous objectives.

Paying glowing tribute to Imaam Abu Hanifah in *Tabyeedhus Saheefah*, Imaam Jalaaluddin As-Suyuti Ash-Shaafi says:

"Abu Hanifah was the first to compile the Ilm of the Shariah. No one before him had embarked on this project. The Sahaabah and the Taabi'een did not systematize and chapterize the Knowledge of the Shariah nor did they

write kutub. They relied on the strength of their understanding, and they made their hearts containers of Knowledge.

After them, Abu Hanifah observed that Knowledge had become scattered. He therefore feared for its future destruction. In this regard, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *'Verily, Allah Ta'ala will not remove Ilm by snatching it from (the hearts) of people. He will take away Knowledge by the death of the Ulama. Then there will remain juhhaal (ignoramus) leaders. They will issue fatwa without knowledge. Thus will they go astray and mislead others as well.'*

It was for this reason that Abu Hanifah compiled, chapterized and systematized the Knowledge of the Shariah. He had kutub prepared beginning with the chapter of Tahaarat, then Salaat and chapters on all the Ibaadaat and social dealings. He completed on the chapter of Inheritance..... Indeed this form of chapterizing (i.e. beginning with Tahaarat and ending with Inheritance) is most beautiful, most skilful, most erudite and most discerning.

Then after him came other Aimmah who derived benefit from his Knoweldge. They followed him and modelled their kutub on the system of his kutub. Hence, we narrate with a beautiful (authentic) chain of transmission (Isnaad) from Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh) that, verily, he said in a lengthy discourse: *'The Ulama are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh.'*

Now how could it ever be possible and even conceivable that this great Imaam Abu Hanifah was in conflict with

the Qur'aan, Sunnah and Ijma'? Justice, sanity and fear for Allah Ta'ala preclude such hallucination.

Rebutting another inconsiderate and incongruent attribution to Imaam Al-Juwaini, the gist of which is a reckless disparagement of Imaam Abu Hanifah and claiming the superiority of Imaam Shaafi' in comparison to Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Suyuti says on the assumption that the attribution to Al-Juwaini is correct:

“Perhaps this is the conclusion of the ijtihaad of Imaam Al-Juwaini. The best course when making a comparison among the Aimmah is to prefer a (specific) opinion over another (specific) opinion on the basis of evidences. In the absence of adillah (evidence), the best course is to adopt silence.”

The Shuyookh of Abu Hanifah

It has already been mentioned that Imaam Abu Hanifah acquired Ahaadith and Fiqh from approximately four thousand Mashaikh. In *Tabyeedhus Saheefah*, Imaam Suyuti enumerates 73 illustrious Muhadditheen and Fuqaha from whom Imaam Abu Hanifah had acquired Knowledge.

The Students of Imaam Abu Hanifah

From the thousands of Students hailing from all lands of Islam, Imaam Suyuti enumerated the names of 91 Muhadditheen and Fuqaha who had acquired Knowledge from Imaam Abu Hanifah.

Glad tidings of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) regarding Abu Hanifah

Imaam Suyuti presents the following Ahaadith which apply to Imaam Abu Hanifah:

“Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘If Knowledge had to be on Thurayya (the star Venus), men from the sons of the Persians would acquire it (from there).’ (Narrated by Abu Nu’aim in Al-Hilyah)

“Ash-Shiraazi narrates in Al-Alqaab from Qais Bin Sa’d Bin Ubaadah that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘If Knowledge was hanging on Thurayya, people from the sons of the Persians would acquire it.’”

The Hadith of Abu Huraira is in Bukhaari and Muslim with the wording: ‘If Imaan was at Thurayya, men from Persia would acquire it.’”

And in Muslim it appears: ‘If Imaan had to be in Thurayya, then a man from the sons of the Persians would go there until he acquires it.’”

In another version in Mu’jamut Tibraani Al-Kabeer, the wording is: ‘If Imaan is hanging on Thurayya, the Arabs will not acquire it. However, men from Persia will acquire it.’ These are authentic narrations on which reliance is reposed.”

Some Manaaqib of Abu Hanifah

The following are some of the Manaaqib (virtues/excellences) of Abu Hanifah mentioned by Imaam Suyuti in his Tabyeedhus Saheefah:

(1) Ibnul Mubaarak said: “The most knowledgeable in Fiqh is Abu Hanifah. I have not seen his likes in Fiqh.”

(2) “Muhammad Bin Bishr said: ‘I used to go from Abu Hanifah to Sufyaan. Once when I came to Abu Hanifah, he asked: ‘From whence do you come?’ I said: ‘From Sufyaan.’ He said: ‘You have come from such a man whom even Alqamah would have been in need of if he was present.’ Then I went to Sufyaan. He asked: ‘From whence do you come?’ I said: ‘From Abu Hanifah.’ He said: ‘You have come from him who is the most knowledgeable in Fiqh in the world.’”

(3) Abdullah Bin Daawood Al-Khuraibi said: “It is incumbent for the people to supplicate in their Salaat for Abu Hanifah.” Then he mentioned Imaam Abu Hanifah’s protection of the Sunnah and Fiqh.

(4) Shaddaad Bin Hakeem said: “I have not seen anyone more learned than Abu Hanifah.”

(5) Khaarijah Bin Mus’ab said: “Four persons completed the Qur’aan in one raka’t –

Uthmaan Bin Affaan, Tameem Ad-Daari, Saeed Bin Jubair and Abu Hanifah (Radhiyallahu anhum).”

(6) Ibn Abi Daawood said: “People are ignorant about Abu Hanifah and envious of him.”

(7) Yahyah Bin Adh-Dharees said that a man came to Sufyaan who said: “I have heard Abu Hanifah saying: ‘I adhere to the Kitaab of Allah. When I don’t find it in the

Kitaab of Allah, I adopt the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). When I do not find anything in the Kitaab of Allah nor in the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then I take whichever statement of the Sahaabah I prefer and leave that which I do not prefer. I do not go beyond their statements towards the statements of others. However, when the matter comes to Ibraaheem, Sha'bi, Ibn Seereen, Hasan, Ataa', Saeed Bin Musayyib and others, then they are people of Ijtihaad. I then resort to Ijthaaad as they do."

(8) Khalf Bin Ayyoob said "Knowledge was transmitted from Allah Ta'ala to Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then to his Sahaabah, then to the Taabi'een, then to Abu Hanifah and his Companions."

(9) Fudhail Bin Iyaadh said: "Abu Hanifah was a Faqeeh well-known for Fiqh, famous for wara', generous with wealth, patient in imparting Knowledge night and day, constant in silence, little in speech unless the mas'alah centred around halaal and haraam. He expended considerable effort on the truth. He fled from the wealth of the Sultan. If there was a Saheeh Hadith regarding a mas'alah, he would adopt it, even if the narration is from the Sahaabah and Taabi'een. In the absence of such narration, he would resort to Qiyaas, and his Qiyaas was beautiful."

(10) Imaam Shaafi' said: "Whoever desires to know Fiqh, should cling to Abu Hanifah and his Companions, for verily, all people are his children in Fiqh."

(11) An-Nadhr Bin Shumail said: “Regarding Fiqh, people were asleep. Abu Hanifah woke them (from their slumber).”

(12) Ibn Abi Daawood said: “Only two persons criticize Abu Hanifah. One who is envious of his deeds or one who is ignorant of his Knowledge.”

(13) Ar-Rabee' said: “Once Abu Hanifah visited the Khalifah Mansoor. Isaa Bin Musa who was present said to Mansoor: ‘Today, this is the Aalim of the world.’” Mansoor said to Abu Hanifah: ‘From whom have you acquired knowledge?’ Abu Hanifah said: ‘From the Companions of Umar who narrate from him, and from the Companions of Ali who narrate from him, and from the Companions of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood who narrate from him. During the time of Ibn Abbaas there was no one on the surface of the earth more knowledgeable than him.’” The Khalifah Mansoor said: ‘You have solidified (Knowledge) for yourself (i.e. you have acquired Knowledge from the most powerful sources).’”

(14) Ismaaeel Bin Ayyaash said that he heard Al-Auzaai' and Al-Umri saying: “Abu Hanifah is the most knowledgeable regarding problematic masaa-il.”

(15) Ali Bin Aasim said: “If the intelligence of Abu Hanifah is weighed with the intelligence of half of mankind, his intelligence will outweigh their intelligence.”

(16) Yahya Bin Ma-een said: “For me is the Qiraa't of Humzah and the Fiqh of Abu Hanifah.”

The information in this chapter has been extracted from Imaam Suyuti's, *Tabyeedhus Saheefah* which he devoted to the *Manaaqib* (virtues and excellences) of Imaam Abu Hanifah in the endeavour to vindicate this illustrious Imaam of Islam against the calumnies and slanders of ignoramuses and malicious persons who harboured *hasad* for Imaam A'zam.

There are many more *Manaaqib* of Imaam Abu Hanifah in *Tabyeedhus Saheefah*. These shall, Insha-Allah, feature in a separate volume which shall deal with the anecdotes of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh).

THE SLANDER THAT ABU HANIFAH WAS AMONG THE MUR'JIYAH

The *Murji'ah* is one of the deviate sects. Their fundamental belief is that Imaan is not contaminated by evil deeds. Judgment is deferred to Qiyaamah, hence a sinner cannot be labelled here on earth, neither is he absolved here on earth nor condemned. They also believe that sin and transgression do not damage or weaken Imaan.

This is obviously not the teaching or belief of Imaam Abu Hanifah. Imaam Abu Hanifah has been baselessly criticized with the slander of being among the deviate *Murji'ah*. There are two types of *Irjaa'* – the *Irjaa'* of the Ahlus Sunnah and the *Irjaa'* of the Ahl-e-Dhalaah (the people of deviation). Imaam Abu Hanifah, his Students and his Shuyookh are among the *Murji'ah* of the Ahlus Sunnah.

The Mu'tazilah who believe that those who commit major sins will remain in the Fire forever, have labelled their opponents among the Ahlus Sunnah as *Murj'iah*. Sometimes the Aimmah who teach that A'maal are not an integral constituent of Imaan, and that Imaan neither increases nor decreases, are also labelled as *Muri'ah*.

The Math-hab of Abu Hanifah is that Imaan does not increase and decrease. Some of the Muhadditheen who believe that A'maal are integral to Imaan and that Imaan increases and decreases, have labelled Imaam Abu Hnifah a *Mujri'ah*.

It is improper and erroneous to simply accept that an Imaam is a *Muri'ah* from the deviates simply on the basis of the labelling of a Muhaddith regardless of his lofty status. It is incumbent to investigate whether the *Irjaa'* is of the deviate class or of the Ahlus Sunnah. In this regard, Al-Haafiz Ath-Thahabi says in *Meezaanul I'tidaal*:

“Mis'ar Bin Kidaam is an Authority. The statement of As-Sulaimaani, viz.' Mis'ar Bin Kidaam, Hamaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan, An-Nu'maan, Amr Bin Murrah, Abdul Bin Abi Rawaad, Abu Muaawiyah, Umar Bin Thar, etc., etc. are Murj'iah, has no validity.”

As-Sayyid Muhammad Murtaza Az-Zabeedi says in his Kitaab, *Uqoodul Jawaahiril Muneefah*: *“The attribution of Irjaa' (of the deviate kind) to Abu Hanifah is erroneous because the opinion of all the Companions of Imaam Abu Hanifah is in conflict with the opinion of the people of Irjaa'. If Abu Hanifah had been a Murj'iah, then his Companions too would have held this opinion. However, they are present today and are in opposition to this (view*

of the Murj'iah). When the people have enacted consensus on an issue, then the dissent of one or two will not be accepted nor their claim be acknowledged. In fact, according to Imaam Abu Hanifah, Salaat behind a Murj'iah is not permissible."

A'maal (virtuous deeds) are not an integral constituent of Imaan nor does Imaan increase or decrease. This is the Math-hab of Imaam Abu Hanifah. There is no conflict with Imaan in this concept propounded by Imaam Abu Hanifah. There is no conflict with the Qur'aan and Sunnah in this concept. To brand him *Murj'iah* on the basis of the contrary concept propounded by the Muhadditheen is bigotry and irrational. There is no Shar'i basis for denying the validity of Imaam Abu Hanifah's concept.

Both concepts, i.e. of Imaam Abu Hanifah and of the Muhadditheen, are the effects of opinion. They are not the products of Wahi. Hence, the holder of one opinion may not label the other one a deviate and a *Murj'iah* on account of any similarity or corroboration in any one such belief/concept which does not conflict with the essentials of the Deen. A person cannot be branded a *Murj'iah* or a Yahoood on the basis of his belief in the Unity of Allah Azza Wa Jal. These deviates also subscribe to the doctrine of the Unity of The Creator. If the similarity is in a belief of kufr, then undoubtedly, the criticism and designation will be valid.

Ibn Abdul Barr said: *"Envious people would attribute what is not in him, and would fabricate which is unbefitting for him."*

Allaamah Abdul Hayy Lucknowi has elaborated in detail this issue in his Kitaab, *Ar-Raf' wat Takmeel*.

WHAT ALLAAMAH ATH-THAHABI SAYS ABOUT ABU HANIFAH

In his introduction to the chapter dealing with the virtues of Imaam Abu Hanifah, Ath-Thahabi says in his *Tazkiratul Huffaaz*:

“This treatise deals with the Faqeeh of the age, the Aalim of the time, Abu Hanifah. He was of a noble elevated status, of purified soul and of an extremely lofty rank An-Nu'maan Bin Thaabit Bin Zuti, the Mufti of Kufa. He, may Allah be pleased with him, was born in the year 80 Hijri. He had pleased Allah, and disseminated whatever he had elaborated of the Deen of Rectitude. He was born during the Khilaafat of Abdul Malik Bin Marwan in Kufa.

Note by Allaamah Muhammad Zaahid Al-Kauthari:

Zuti is not the name of Thaabit's father. Thaabit's father was An-Nu'maan Bin Al-Marzubaan whose father was Zuti. Imaam Mas'ood Bin Shaibah has mentioned this in *At-Ta'leem*. This conforms with the view of Ismaa'eel Bin Hammaad.

Having been born in the year 80 Hijri is the preferred and more cautious view. This is the majority view. However, this conclusion will apply when other views in this regard are not considered with (their) evidences. According to Ibn Zawwaad, the birth of Imaam Abu Hanifah was in 61 Hijri. It is stated in *Ansaab* of As-Sam'aani that he was

born in 70 Hijri. This is also said in *Kitaab Al-Jarh wat Ta'deel* of Ibn Hibbaan, and in *Raudhatul Qudhaat* of Abul Qaasim As-Simnaani, the contemporary of Al-Khatib Al-Baghdaadi. This latter view is further corroborated by the narration of Hamaad Bin Abi Hanifah recorded by Al-Haafiz Muhammad Bin Mukhlad Al-Attaar. *(End of note)*

Abu Hanifah's birth was during the era of a Jamaa't of Sahaabah (Radhiyallhu anhum). He was among their Taabi'een, for verily it is authentically reported that he had seen Anas Bin Maalik (Radhiyallahu anhu) when he (Anas) visited Kufa. Muhammad Bin Sa'd said: "*Saif Bin Jaabir said that he heard Abu Hanifah saying: 'I saw Anas (Radhiyallahu anhu).'*"

Imaam Abu Hanifah's Akhlaaq (Character) and Wara' (Piety)

Once when Imaam Abu Yusuf came to Khalifah Haroon Rashid, the latter enquired: "Describe for me the character of Abu Hanifah." Abu Yusuf said: "Wallaah! He was extreme in abstention from haraam; aloof from the people of the dunya; of enduring silence, and perpetually in rumination. He was not a talkative person. If he was asked about a mas'alah, he would answer if he had its knowledge. O Ameerul Mu'mineen! I know of him only that he would protect himself and his Deen by means of seclusion. He never mentioned anything about anyone except what was good."

Some people in the presence of Sufyaan Bin Uyainah were criticizing Abu Hanifah. Sufyaan said: "Stop! Abu

Hanifah surpassed all people in abundance of Salaat. He was the greatest of them in observance of Amaanat (Trust), and the best of them as far as culture.”

Shareek said: “Abu Hanifah was of enduring silence, perpetually in reflection, and abstemious in conversation.”

Al-Hasan Bin Ismaaeel Bin Mujaalid said: “I heard Wakee’ saying: Al-Hasan Bin Saalih Bin Huyyayy said: “Abu Hanifah’s fear for Allah was profound. He was dreadful of haraam being made lawful.”

Ibnul Mubaarak said: “I never saw a man more dignified in a gathering nor more beautiful in silence and tolerance than Abu Hanifah.”

Al-Muthanna Bin Rajaa’ said: “Abu Hanifah had imposed on himself to give Sadqah of one dinar if he should take an oath by Allah to emphasize the truth of the Hadith he presented. Whenever he spent on his family, he would give the same amount in Sadqah.

Qais Bin Rabee’ said: “Abu Hanifah was a man of profound piety and generous to his brethren.”

Muhammad Bin Jaabir said: “Abu Hanifah spoke very little except when asked. He laughed little, reflected much, and was always in grief as if a calamity had just befallen him.”

The Shuyookh and Students of Abu Hanifah

Abu Hanifah acquired Fiqh from Hammaad Bin Abu Sulaimaan, the Companion of Ibraaheem Nakha'i, and from others. According to one narration, he was in the companionship of Hammaad for ten years. According to another narration, fifteen years.

Note by Allaamah Kauthari

The correct version is that Imaam Abu Hanifah joined Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan during the era of Ibraaheem An-Nakh'i, then remained with him until his (Hammaad's) demise in the year 120 Hijri.

He acquired Hadith from Ataa Bin Rabaah in Makkah. Abu Hanifah said: *"I did not see anyone better than Ataa."* He also heard Ahaadith from Atiyyah Al-Aufi, Abdur Rahmaan Bin Hurmuz Al-A'raj, Ikrimah, Naafi', Adiiyy Bin Thaabit, Amr Bin Dinaar, Salmah Bin Kuhail, Qataadah Bin Di-aamah, Abi Az-Zubair, Mansoor, Abu Ja'far Muhammad Bin Ali Bin Husain, and from a great number of other Taabi'een.

A Jamaa't from the seniors had acquired Fiqh from Abu Hanifah. Among them are Zufar Bin Huzail, Abu Yusuf Al-Qaadhi, Hammad Bin Abi Hanifah, Nooh Bin Abi Maryam), Abu Mutee', Al-Hakam Bin Abdullah Al-Balkhi, Al-Hasan Bin Ziyaad Al-Lu'lu'i, Muhammad Bin Al-Hasan and Asad Bin Amr Al-Qaadhi (and innumerable others).

A large number of Muhaditheen and Fuqaha whose number cannot be enumerated narrate from Abu Hanifah.

From his contemporaries were Mugheerah Bin Miqsam, Zakariyya Bin Abi Zaidah, Mis'ar Bin Kidaam, Sufyaan Ath-Thauri, Maalik Bin Mighwal and Yunus Bin Abi Ishaq.

From Narrators after him were Zaidah, Shareek, Al-Hasan Bin Saalih, Abu Bakr Ayyaash, Isaa Bin Yunus, Ali Bin Mushir, Hafs Bin Ghiyaath, Jareer Bin Abdul Hameed, Abdullah Bin Al-Mubaarak, Abu Muaawiyah, Wakee', Al-Muhaaribi, Abu Ishaq Al-Fazaari, Yazeed Bin Haaron, Ishaq Bin Yusuf Al-Azraq, Al-Muaafi Bin Imraan, Zaid Bin Al-Hubaab, Sa'd Bin As-Salt, Makki Bin Ibraaheem, Abu Aasim An-Nabeel, Abdur Razzaaq Bin Hamaam, Hafs Bin Abdur Rahmaan Al-Balkhi, Ubaidullah Bin Musa, Abu Abdur Rahmaan Al-Muqri, Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Ansaari, Abu Nuaim, Hauthah Bin Khalifah, Abu Usaamah, Abu Yahya Al-Himmaani, Ibn An-Numair, Ja'far Bin Aun, Ishaq Bin Sulaimaan Ar-Raazi, and numerous from creation.

Note by Allaamah Kauthari

Those who narrated from Abu Hanifah, enumerated by Al-Haafiz Abul Hajjaaj Al-Mizzi in *Tahzeebul Kamaal* are approximately a hundred. This is nowhere near to the large number of thousands who narrated from Abu Hanifah.

The Ibaadat of Abu Hanifah

Imaam Abu Hanifah's *Qiyaamul Lail* (staying awake in Ibaadat the entire night), Tahajjud and Ibaadat are established by *Tawaatur* (abundance of narration incessantly and continuously narrated in all eras). Ya'qoob

Bin Shaibah said: "I heard Abu Aasim An- Nabeel say: "Abu Hanifah was known as *Al-Watad (a stake or a peg driven firmly into the ground)* because of the abundance of his Salaat."

The father of Yahya Al-Himmaani said: "I was in Abu Hanifah's company for six months. I saw him performing Fajr Salaat with the Wudhu of Isha', and he used to complete the Qur'aan every night by the time of Sahr.

Abdur Rahmaan Al-Muqri said: "If you had seen Abu Hanifah performing Salaat, you would understand that Salaat is his profession."

Ibraaheem Bin Rustum Al-Marwazi said: "I heard Khaarojah Bin Mus'ab say: "Four persons from the Aimmah had completed the whole Qur'aan in one Raka't: Uthmaan Bin Affaan, Tameem Ad-Daari, Sa-eed Bin Jubair and Abu Hanifah (Radhiyallahu anhum)."

Al-Qaasim Bin Al-Ma'n said: "Abu Hanifah stood one night (in Salaat) repeating the aayat

بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَىٰ وَأَمَرُّ ❁

"In fact, the Hour (Qiyaamat) is their promised time, and the Hour is most catastrophic and most unpleasant."

(Aayat 46 Surah Al-Qamar)

and weeping until the morning."

Yazeed Bin Kumait said that a man once said to Abu Hanifah: "Fear Allah!". He fell down, became pale and

shivered, and he said: *“Jazaakallaah khairan! (May Allah reward you munificiently). People are always in need of one who say so.”*

Haamid Bin Aadam Al-Marwazi said: *“I heard Ibnul Mubaarak say: ‘I did not see anyone more pious than Abu Hanifah. Verily, he was tested with whipping and with wealth.’”*

Once Ismaaeel, the grandson of Imaam Abu Hanifah, with his father, Hammaad passed by Al-Kunaasah (a market-place). He (Ismaaeel) said: *“My father cried. I asked: ‘O my father! What causes you to cry?’ He said: ‘O my son! At this place Ibn Hubairah (the governor) had your grandfather (Imaam Abu Hanifah) whipped for ten days – every day ten lashes to compel him to become the Qaadhi, but he refused.’”*

Abdur Razzaaq said: *“I did not see anyone more tolerant than Abu Hanifah. Once we were seated with him in Musjidul Khaif. A man asked a mas’alah and he (Abu Hanifah) gave the fatwa. The man said: ‘Hasan Basri said so and so.’ Abu Hanifah said: ‘Hasan had erred.’ Then a man with his face masked entered and said: ‘O son of an adulteress! You say that Hasan has erred!’ Then the people attempted to attack him (the masked man). Abu Hanifah said: ‘I say that Al-Hasan has erred, and Ibn Mas’ood has said what is correct.’”*

A man abusing and vilifying Abu Hanifah said: *‘O kaafir! O zindeeq!’* Abu Hanifah responded: *“May Allah forgive*

you. He knows of me the contrary of what you are saying.”

Al-Qaasim Bin Ma'an said: "Ibn Hubairah apprehended Abu Hanifah intending to appoint him as the Qaadhi. Abu Hanifah refused and was imprisoned. It was said to Abu Hanifah that Ibn Hubairah had taken an oath not to release you as long as you refuse to become the Qaadhi. He intends to construct a building and you should calculate the number of bricks he will require. *(If Imaam Abu Hanifah had agreed, it would free Ibn Hubairah of his oath and he (Abu Hanifah would be released).* Then He (Abu Hanifah) said: "Even if he asks me to count the the doors of the Musjid, I shall not do so."

Someone mentioned Abu Hanifah to Ibnul Mubaarak. He said: *"What could be said about a man to whom the world and wealth were presented, but he shunned it. He was lashed, and he patiently bore it. He did not pursue that which others hanker after."*

Once Imaam Abu Hanifah said to a group of his select, senior Students: "If any one of you is offered the post of the Qaadhi, and if he is aware of a corruption within himself which Allah has concealed, then it is not permissible for him to be the Qaadhi. His wage will not be lawful for him. If one becomes a qaadhi by force of circumstances, then he should not keep himself aloof from the people. He should perform the five Salaat in the Musjid, and at the time of every Salaat, he should proclaim: "Does anyone have a need?" After performing Isha', he should proclaim thrice in a raised voice: "Does

anyone have a need?" Thereafter he should enter into his home."

If he is incapacitated by a sickness which precluded him from attending to his duty, then he should deduct from his salary according to the days of sickness."

Hasan Bin Ziyaad said: "Abu Hanifah said: 'When the qaadhi takes a bribe, he is dismissed (automatically) even if he is not dismissed (by the authorities).'"

Imaam Abu Hanifah's Fiqh

Yusuf Bin Musa said: "I heard Jareer saying: 'When Al-A'mash was questioned about subtleties, he would send them to Abu Hanifah. Mugheerah said: 'Why do you not go to Abu Hanifah?' (i.e. for acquiring knowledge in Fiqh).'"

Yahya Bin Aktham said that Jareer narrated to him: 'Mugheerah said to me: 'Sit with Abu Hanifah and you will understand Fiqh. Verily, even if Ibraaheem was alive he would have sat with him."

Shabaabah Bin Sawwaar said: "Shu'bah held Abu Hanifah in very high esteem. He was very affectionate towards him."

Ubaidullah Bin Musa said: "I heard Mis'ar saying: 'May Allah have mercy on Abu Hanifah. Undoubtely, he was a Faqeeh and an Aalim."

Abu Bakr Bin Ayyaash said: "Abu Hanifah was the greatest Faqeeh of his era."

Rauh Bin Ubaadah said: "I was by Ibn Juraij. It was said to him that Abu Hanifah has died.' He said: "May Allah have mercy on him. With him has departed considerable knowledge."

Yazeed Bin Haaroon said: "Abu Hanifah was the greatest Faqeeh whom I saw."

Shaddaad Bin Hakeem said: "I did not see a man with more knowledge than Abu Hanifah in his age."

Ibnul Mubaarak said: "If Allah had not linked me with Abu Hanifah and Sufyaan, I would have been a bid'ati."

Yahya Bin Aadam said: "I heard Hasan Bin Saalih saying: Abu Hanifah was most understanding in his Knowledge and most grounded in it. When a Hadith was authentic by him, he would not deflect from it to something else."

Al-Muzani said: 'I heard Shaafi' saying: "The people are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh."

Ibraaheem Bin Abdullah Al-Marwazi Al-Khallaal said: "Abu Hanifah was a Beacon (of Knowledge)."

Ahmad Bin As-Sabaah said: "I heard Shaafi' saying: 'It was said to Maalik: 'Have you seen Abu Hanifah?' He said: 'Yes. If he converses with you regarding this pillar, saying that it is of gold, then he will prove it to be so.'"

Bishr Haafi said: "Only a jaahil (ignoramus) or a haasid (jealous person) will criticize Abu Hanifah."

Abu Muslim Al-Kajjee said that Muhammad Bin Sa'd Al-Kaatib narrated that Al-Khuraibi said: 'It is incumbent on the People of Islam to make dua for Abu Hanifah after their Salaat.'

Makki Bin Ibraaheem said: "Abu Hanifah was the greatest Faqeeh of his era."

Yahya Bin Ma-een said: "I heard Yahya Bin Saeed Al-Qattaan saying: 'We do not belie Allah! We have not heard a better opinion than the opinion of Abu Hanifah. We have adopted most of his views.'"

Yahya Bin Abi Taalib said: "I heard Ali Bin Aasim saying: 'If the Knowledge of Abu Hanifah is weighed against the Knowledge of the people of his era, his Knowledge will outweigh it.'"

Talq Bin Ghannaam An-Nakha'i said: "I heard Hafs Bin Ghiyaath saying: 'The speech of Abu Hanifah is more subtle than poetry. Only a jaahil finds fault with it.'"

ABU HANIFAH AND RAAI' (OPINION)

The often heard slander of the Salafis and of detractors, old and new, is that Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) would accord preference to self-opinion (raai') over the Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Allaamah Thahabi, and many other authorities of the Shariah of all Math-habs have firmly debunked this fallacy. In his biography of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh), Allaamah Thahabi enumerates the

statements of many Authorities to confirm the falsity of the raai' slander levelled against Imaam A'zam (Rahmatullah alayh). Some extracts appear hereunder.

Nuaim Bin Hammaad said: "I heard Abu Ismah saying: 'I heard Abu Hanifah saying: 'Whatever comes from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) it is *alar ra's wal ain* (on our head and eyes). Whatever comes from the Sahaabah, we select (therefrom). And, that which comes from others, then they are *Rijaal* and we too are *Rijaal*,'"

(Alar ra's wal ain: This is an expression meaning wholehearted and happy acceptance and submission without the slightest hesitation. 'Rijaal' (Men) in the context means qualified Ulama.)

Ibn Ma-een said that Thauri said: "I heard Ubaid Bin Abi Qurrah say: 'I heard Yahya Bin Ad-Dhuraish saying: 'I was present by Ath-Thauri when a man came and said: 'What is your complaint against Abu Hanifah?' He (Thauri) said: 'What about him?'. The man said: 'I heard Abu Hanifah saying: 'I cling to the Kitaab of Allah. When I do not find anything (pertaining to an issue) therein, then (I adopt) the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). If I do not find (it in the Sunnah), then I adopt the view of any Sahaabi I wish. However, when the issue stops at Ibraaheem, Sha'bi, Hasan and Ataa', then I resort to Ijtihaad just as they had resorted to Ijtihaad.'

Then Sufyaaan Thauri remained silent for a long while. Then he spoke some words which everyone in the gathering wrote down. He said: 'We hear from Hadith some severe narrations which we fear. And, we hear some

tender narrations which please us. We do not take a reckoning from those who are alive nor do we make a judgment of those who have died. We accept what we have heard. We assign what we do not know to its knower, and we fault our opinion (in preference) for their opinion.”

Muhammad Bin Shujaa’ Ath-Thalji said: ‘I heard Ismaaeel Bin Hamaad Bin Abi Hanifah saying: ‘Abu Hanifah said: ‘We do not compel anyone to submit to our opinion nor do we say that it is incumbent on anyone to accept it. Whoever has a better opinion should come forward with it.”

Hasan Bin Ziyaad Al-Lu’lu’i said: Abu Hanifah said: ‘This, our opinion is the best of our effort. If a better opinion is forthcoming, we accept it.”

Ibn Hazam said: “All the Companions of Abu Hanifah are unanimous that the Math-hab of Abu Hanifah is that even a Dhaeef Hadith is preferred by him over qiyaas and raai’.”

Ubaidullah Bin Amr Ar-Raqqi said: “We were by Al-A’mash when Abu Hanifah was present. Someone asked Al-A’mash a mas’alah. He said: ‘Give the fatwa, O Nu’maan!’ Abu Hanifah answered. Al-A’mash then asked: ‘From whence do you say this? (*That is, what is the evidence?*). Abu Hanifah said: ‘The Hadith which you had narrated to us.’ Then he narrated the Hadith to Al-A’mash who commented: ‘You (the Fuqaha) are the doctors whilst we (the Muhadditheen) are pharmacists.”

Ibn Abi Rizmah said that Abdaan said that he heard Ibn Mubaarak say: ‘When I hear people speaking ill of Abu Hanifah, it grieves me. I fear Allah’s Wrath for them.’

WHAT IMAAM GHAZAALI SAYS OF ABU HANIFAH

In his *Ihyaaul Uloom*, Imaam Ghazaali (Rahmatullah alayh) says:

“The Fuqaha who are the Authorities of Fiqh and whom the vast majority of people follow are five: Shaafi’, Maalik, Ahmad Bin Hambal, Abu Hanifah and Sufyaan Ath-Thauri (Rahmatullaah alayhim). Each one of them was an Aabid, Zaahid and an Aalim of the Knowledge of the Aakhirah, and a Faqeeh regarding the needs of people in this world. With his Fiqh, he intended to acquire the pleasure of Allah Ta’ala.

We shall narrate from these four attributes of these Fuqaha. As for their knowledge of Fiqh it is an established and obvious fact (*which does not need elaboration*).

Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) was also an Aabid, Zaahid fearful of Allah Ta’ala, intending to acquire the pleasure of Allah with his knowledge. Regarding him being an Aabid, it is known from the narration of Ibnul Mubaarak who said: “Abu Hanifah was one of *Murawwat(refined culture)* and one who performed Salaat in abundance.” Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan narrated that he would remain awake the entire night.

It has been narrated that he used to remain awake half the night. Then once whilst walking in the road someone pointed towards him (Abu Hanifah) and said to another person: "He remains awake the entire night." Abu Hanifah thereafter commented: "I feel shame for Allah Ta'ala that I am praised with an attribute which is not in me." *(Henceforth, he would remain awake the entire night.)*

Regarding his Zuhd, Ar-Rabee' Bin Aasim said: "Yazeed Bin Umar Bin Hubairah (the governor) sent me to Abu Hanifah to inform him that he is being appointed as the treasurer of the Baitul Maal. He declined and was flogged twenty lashes." Reflect, how he fled from leadership. He rather suffered to be punished. Al-Hakam Bin Hishaam Ath-Thaqafi said that it became well-known in Shaam that Abu Hanifah was the most trustworthy person. Thus the Sultan intended to entrust the keys of his treasury to Abu Hanifah. Either he accepts or he would be flogged. Abu Hanifah chose the option of flogging (and he was flogged) rather than the punishment of Allah Ta'ala."

When Abu Hanifah was mentioned to Ibnul Mubaarak, he commented: "You speak about a man to whom the world with all its treasures was presented, but he fled from it."

On another occasion it was said to Abu Hanifah: "Ameerul Mu'mineen Abu Ja'far Al-Mansur had ordered that a gift of 10,000 dirhams be presented to you." Abu Hanifah was not pleased (as he detested the wealth of the rulers). On the day appointed for the delivery of the gift, Abu Hanifah, after performing Fajr Salaat, covered himself with his shawl and did not speak to anyone. Then Al-Hasan Bin Quhtabah, the messenger (of the Khalifah), arrived with the wealth. He entered, but Abu Hanifah did not speak

with him. Then some of those who were present (fearing the repercussions of Imaam Abu Hanifah's rebuff) said to the messenger: "This is his usual habit. He does not speak to us except a word or two." Then he said: "Put the money in this bag in the corner of the room." Thereafter, Abu Hanifah said to his son: "When I die and after you have buried me, then take this pile of money to Al-Hasan Bin Quhtabah and say to him: "Take your trust which you had entrusted to Abu Hanifah."

His son said: "I did so. Al-Hasan then commented: "May Allah have mercy on your father. Verily he was extremely zealous about his Deen."

It is narrated that Abu Hanifah was summoned to become the Qaadhi. He said: "I lack the ability for this post." It was said to him: 'Why?' He said: "If I am speaking the truth (i.e. "I lack the qualifications for being the Qaadhi."), then obviously I am unfit for the position. On the other hand, if I am speaking a lie, then (obviously) a liar is unfit for this position of Qadhaa". *(In his response, Imaam Abu Hanifah said that his statement: 'I am not fit to be the Qaadhi.', is either true or false. There is no third option. If true, then the answer is obvious, viz., that he is not qualified. If his statement is false, then a liar too is not fit for the lofty post of Amaanat.)*

"Regarding his Knowledge of the Way of the Akhirah and the affairs of the Deen, and the Ma'rifat of Allah Azza Wa Jal, his excessive fear for Allah Ta'ala confirms this. Also, his Zuhd (abstemiousness) in the dunya confirms this. Ibn Juraij said: "It has reached me that this Nu'maan

Bin Thaabit from your Kufa was extreme in his fear for Allah Ta'ala."

Shareek An-Nakha'i said: "Abu Hanifah was prolonged in silence, perpetually in reflection and of little speech with people. These are the clearest signs of esoteric (baatini) Knowledge and engrossment with the objectives of the Deen. Whoever has been granted silence and Zuhd, verily he has been granted all Knowledge."

Abul Juwairiyyah said: "I was in Abu Hanifah's company for six months. Not a single night did he lie down. Abu Hanifah used to stay awake half the night. Then once he passed by some people who commented that he remained awake the entire night. Abu Hanifah then said: 'I feel shy (for Allah Ta'ala) that I be praised for a quality/act which is lacking in me.' Thereafter he would remain awake the entire night."

Ibn Abi Laila said to Ibn Shubramah: "Do you not see that this son of a weaver (*sarcastically referring to Imaam Abu Hanifah*) refutes every mas'alah on which we issue a fatwa?" Ibn Shubramah said: "I do not know if he is a son of a weaver or not. But I know that the dunya came running to him, but he fled from it, and the dunya fled from us while we went searching for it."

MALFOOTHAAT OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH (RAHMATULLAH ALAYH) AND OF OTHER AUTHORITIES OF THE SHARIAH

1. It is not permissible for anyone to present his personal opinion in opposition to Kitaabullaah (the Qur'aan Hakeem), the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) or the Ijmaa' (Consensus) of the Sahaabah. If there are differences among the Sahaabah, then we (from their different views) adopt the view which appears to be closest to Kitaabullaah or the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). This (latter course) is the substratum for Ijtihad.

2. If it was not for the fear of narrowness developing in the Deen, I would never venture to issue Fatwa. Of the issues which leads to Jahannam, the most dangerous is Fatwa.

3. *(Whenever Imaam Abu Hanifah –Rahmatullah alayh – was cast into a quandary regarding any mas'alah, he would say to his Companions/Students): “This is the effect of some sin which I have committed.” (Then he would lapse into Istighfaar, then renew wudhu and perform two raka'ts Salaatut Taubah. The problem would then be solved, and he would comment: “This is a kind of bashaarat (glad tidings). I have hope that my Taubah has been accepted, hence I have understood the mas'alah. When the renowned Wali, Hadhrat Fudhail Bin Iyaadh (Rahmatullah alayh) was informed of this practice, he shed tears in profusion, and he commented: “O Allah! Have mercy on Abu Hanifah. Due to the paucity of his sins, he*

has been able to recognize his error. Others will not realize this because they are drowned in sin.”

4. Once while Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) was walking in the road, accidentally, he placed his foot on the foot of a child who was close by. The child said: “O Shaikh! Are you not afraid of the compensation of the Day of Qiyaamah?” The effect of the boy’s words overwhelmed Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh), and he fell down unconscious. When he revived, someone asked in surprise about the overwhelming effect of the boy’s statement. He said: “I fear that Alah Ta’ala had inspired into the boy’s heart that statement.”
5. An adversary of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) said in anger: “O bid’ati! O zindeeq! Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) responded: “May Allah forgive you. Allah Ta’ala knows that you have spoken erroneously. After having recognized Allah Ta’ala, I am not concerned with anyone else. I petition Him for forgiveness and I fear His punishment.” The adversary said: “Forgive me.” Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) said: “Whatever a jaahil says to me, I forgive him. But, when an Aalim attributes such things to me which are not in me, then his affair is extremely delicate because the effects of making gheebat of the Ulama are enduring (even after having been forgiven).”
6. Whenever a person would narrate to Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) anything about others, he would immediately debar that person and say: “Abandon narrating the detestable things of people. May Allah

forgive any person who says something ill about me, and may Allah have mercy on the one who says something good about me. Instead of delving into the affairs of people, acquire *Tafaqquh* (Understanding of the Deen). Leave others.”

7. Someone asked: “Is Alqamah better or Aswad? *(Both were among the very senior students of Hadhrat Ibn Mas’ood.* Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) responded: “I do not consider my self worthy of even mentioning their names besides making Dua for them. How is it possible for me to prefer any one of them over the other?”
8. Someone said to Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh): “People are criticizing you in abundance, but you say nothing in response.” He replied: “This is the fadhl (grace) of Allah. He awards it to whomever He wishes.”
9. “If it was not for the fear that Ilm (Knowledge of the Deen) would be lost, I would not issue Fatwa. It is Allah’s fear which constrains me to issue Fatwa. (If it was not this fear), then why should others be in comfort while the sin (of unnecessary issuance of fatwa) settles on me.”
10. “I have never repaid evil with evil nor have I ever cursed anyone. I never oppressed any Muslim or even a Zimmi Kaafir nor did I deceive anyone or abuse trust.”
11. Whoever desires a status before being deserving of it will be disgraced.”

12. "If the Ulama are not Auliya, then there will be no Wali of Allah in this dunya and the Aakhirah." (In other words, if a learned man is not a Wali, then he is not an Aalim. He remains a jaahil.)
13. "If a man's Ilm does not prevent him from prohibitions (haraam things), he is then in a great loss."
14. Someone asked Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh): "What aids in the acquisition of *Tafaqquh*? He said: "The adoption of solitude." The person asked: "How is solitude acquired?" He replied: Reduce relationships (abstain from unnecessary intermingling with people)." The man said: "How should this be reduced?" Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "Do not take more than what is necessary."
15. "What greater goodness is there than teaching people about halaal and haraam. We seek Allah's protection from being disobedient to Him. We prevent people from His disobedience."
16. "Allah Ta'ala has taken a pledge from the Ulama that they will impart Ilm to people and not conceal it. An Aalim teaches solely for the Pleasure of Allah. He has no special confidantes."
17. Someone asked Imaam Abu Hanifah about the conflict and war between Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallahu anhu) and Hadhrat Muaawiyah (Radhiyallahu anhu). He responded: "When Allah Ta'ala orders me to stand in His Presence (in Qiyaamah), He will not question me about that. I shall be

questioned about that which had been imposed on me. I therefore am contented to be involved in only such matters about which I shall be questioned.”

18. “I am bewildered by people who speak about Deeni issues on the basis of conjecture.”
19. A person who acquires knowledge for the sake of the world, is deprived of the barkat (Noor) of Ilm. He does not become grounded in Knowledge. The creation of Allah does not benefit from him. He who acquired Knowledge for the sake of the Deen, gains the barkat of Ilm. He becomes grounded in Ilm, and he derives benefit from his Knowledge.”
20. Once Imaam Abu Hanifah advised Hadhrat Ibraahim Bin Adham (Rahmatullah alayh): “O Ibraahim! You are the recipient of a great and virtuous share of ibaadat. You should also focus on Knowledge of the Deen, for it is the basis of Deen. All worldly and Deeni affairs are rectified by means of Ilm of the Deen.”
21. The Khalifah Mansoor once asked Imaam Abu Hanifah: “Why do you not visit me?” Imaam Abu Hanifah replied: “I have no fear of you regarding any of my possessions. If I frequent you, I shall be cast into fitnah (trial) and the consequence will be humiliation.”
22. Responding to a similar question of the governor of Kufah, Imaam Abu Hanifah said: “A piece of bread, some water and cloth to cover the body are better than the

disgrace and shame which will follow afterwards (i.e. in Qiyaamah).”

23. Acquire *Tafaqquh* in the Deen and leave the people (do not hanker after them). Allah Ta'ala will make them dependent on you (the true Ulama).”
24. “The hardships of the world pale into oblivion for him who wants to be saved of the punishment of the Aakhirah. He who saves himself from disgrace (the disgrace of sin and disobedience), the world is humiliated in his presence.”
25. “Do not accumulate mounds of sins for yourself and mounds of wealth for your heirs.”
26. Some questions were put to the famous Taabi'ee, Hadhrat A'mash (Rahmatullah alayh), Imaam Abu Hanifah was present at that session. Hadhrat A'mash instructed Imaam Abu Hanifah to answer the questions. After he had responded, Hadhrat A'mash asked: “From whence did you acquire these masaa-il?” Imaam Abu Hanifah: “From the very same Ahaadith which I have narrated from you.” Then he narrated all the Ahaadith which he had heard from Hadhrat A'mash. Then, Hadhrat A'mash said: “You have presented to me in a short time the summary of the Ahaadith which I had narrated to you in a hundred days. It had not crossed my mind that you would have been able to implement these narrations in this manner.” Thereafter, Hadhrat A'mash said: “O Honourable Fuqaha! You are physicians while we (the Muhadditheen) are only

pharmicists. O Abu Hanifah! You have combined both these professions”. In other words, you have *riwaayat* (narration) as well as *diraayat* (understanding) of the meanings.

27. “When I commenced my pursuit of Knowledge, I made a study of all branches of Knowledge. I pondered in every subject of Knowledge, and I took an account of their advantages and consequences. I discerned some deficiency in every branch of Knowledge except Fiqh. I investigated it thoroughly. The more I probed it, the greater became my reverence for it. I realized that by virtue of this Knowledge one gains the fortune of the company of the Fuqaha, Mashaaikh and Men of Wisdom. One acquires the opportunity of emulating their noble character. The fulfilment of the obligations of the Deen, the correct effort for establishing the Deen and discharging Ibaadat correctly are not possible without the Knowledge of Fiqh. By means of Fiqh, both the dunya (worldly life) and the Aakhirah (spiritual life) are reformed. Thus, I became engrossed in Fiqh.”

28. In the beginning, Imaam Abu Hanifah would not answer questions. He was very aloof. He says: “I did not participate in this Knowledge as I am now doing. One night I saw myself in a dream digging the blessed Qabr of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). I retrieved bones from the grave, and after arranging them I placed them on my chest. When I woke from my sleep, I was stricken by grief. Only Allah Ta’ala knew what my lamentable condition was. Tears flowed in profusion. The thought of

digging a grave, and that too, the blessed Qabr of Nabi-e-Kareem (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was devastating.

I remained at home and abandoned going to the majlis (the Ilmi class). My health suffered severely. Friends came to visit me. One companion said that he could not see any ailment in me. He said: "I perceive no sickness. What is the story?" After I narrated my dream, he said: "Insha-Allah, this dream is good. A companion of Muhammad Ibn Seereen is nearby. Let us call him." (*Ibn Sireen is Islam's famous interpreter of dreams. He was also a Muhaddith.*) I said that I, myself would go to him.

When I narrated my dream to him, he asked: "Is this your dream?" I said: "Yes, I have seen it." He said: "You will acquire the taufeeq to disseminate the Sunnah in a manner which no one before you had accomplished. You shall be grounded soundly in Ilm."

Henceforth, I applied myself with greater diligence in the Knowledge (of Fiqh). O Allah! Let the end be with goodness."

29. "It is indeed queer that people say that I issue fatwa on the basis of opinion when in reality my fataawa are based on Naql (*narrational evidence – Qur'aan, Ahaadith, Aathaar*)."

30 "It is not permissible for anyone to present his personal opinion in opposition to the Qur'aan, the Sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Ijma' of the Sahaabah. However, when there is a difference of

opinion among the Sahaabah, then we adopt one of their views which is closer to Kitaabullah and the Sunnah.”

31. Imaam Abu Yusuf said that he would make dua first for Imaam Abu Hanifah, then for his parents. Imaam Abu Hanifah said: “Whenever I make dua, I include my Ustaad, Hammaad Bin Abu Sulaimaan.”
32. “If it was not for the fear of narrowness (bigotry) developing in the Deen, I would not have issued fatwas. The most dangerous entity to lead one into Jahannam is the issuance of fatwa.”
33. Hadhrat Fadhl Bin Thukain said that he heard Imaam Abu Hanifah say about a person who harboured malice for him: “May Allah make him a Mufti.”
34. A man said to Imaam Abu Hanifah: “Fear Allah!” Imaam Saahib lowered his head and lapsed into deep reflection. Then he said: “O my Brother! May Allah Ta’ala reward you with goodness. When the knowledge of a man gains prominence, then it is necessary to remind him of Allah Ta’ala so that he renders all his deeds solely for the Sake of Allah Ta’ala.”
35. Hadhrat Shaqeeq Balkhi (Rahmatullah alayh) said: “Once I accompanied Imaam Abu Hanifah to visit a sick person. Along the way a man who was at a distance, on seeing Imaam Abu Hanifah, attempted to hide himself. As he was about to take another route, Imaam Abu Hanifah proclaimed loudly: “Do not change your route!” When the

man realized that Imaam Abu Hanifah had seen him, he felt embarrassed, and halted. Imaam Abu Hanifah asked him to explain his attitude. He said: "I am indebted to you for a sum of money. Even after lapsing of a considerable period of time, I have been unable to repay you. I was ashamed, therefore, I wanted to avoid you."

Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "Subhaanallaah! Has the matter reached such a level that you hide from me whenever you see me. I have waived the debt. Don't ever hide from me. Do forgive me for the inconvenience and distress which I have caused to you." Hadrath Shaqeeq commented: "From this episode I understood that Imaam Abu Hanifah was a genuine Zaahid (one who was devoid of worldly love and attachment)."

36. Imaam Abul Khattaab Jurjaani (rahmatullah alayh) narrates: "Once a youth came and posed a question. When Imaam Abu Hanifah had answered, the youth said sharply: "You are wrong!" Everyone in the gathering was silent. Imaam Jurjaani commented: "Don't all of you understand the honour of this Shaikh (Imaam Abu Hanifah)? You remain silent while this young man acquitted himself disrespectfully." Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "Don't reprimand them in any way. I have instructed them to adopt this attitude."

37. "Due to the honour of my Ustaad, Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan, I never stretched my legs in the direction of his home." (*The distance between the two homes was 7 kilometres.*)

38. "He who has garlanded himself with Knowledge and imparts it to people without realizing that Allah Ta'ala will question him about his fatwas, verily, his Deen and his life are in danger."
39. Imaam Abu Hanifah said to his companions: "If your motive for pursuing this Knowledge is not the Deen. Then you will never acquire the taufeeq for goodness."
40. "The greatest act of obedience is Imaan, and the worst sin is kufr. The hope of forgiveness for sins is for him who is steadfast in obedience with Imaan, and who abstains from the worst sin (of kufr)."
41. Once the Imaam of the Musjid of Imaam Abu Hanifah was not present. Imaam Sahib's son, Hammaad stepped forward to lead the Salaat. Imaam Abu Hanifah grabbed him by his kurtah and prevented him from proceeding. Someone else then led the Salaat. At home, Hammaad said: "Beloved father! Today you have humiliated me." Imaam Abu Hanifah commented: "No! On the contrary, when you had attempted to disgrace yourself, I prevented you therefrom. If you had led the Salaat and thereafter if just one person said that the Salaat should be repeated, you would have been thoroughly humiliated. Do not meddle in the affairs of the public."
42. "When I was 16 years of age, I accompanied my father for Hajj. I saw a Buzrug (a saintly person) giving a discourse. Numerous people had gathered around him. When I asked my father about the Buzrug, he said that he was

Rasulullah's Sahaabi, Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Al-Haarith (Radhiyallahu anhu), and he was narrating to the people what he had heard from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). My father instructed me to go forward. Due to the large crowd I was unable to reach the front. Finally, my father opened a path for me and I reached in close proximity to the Sahaabi. I heard him say: "I have heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saying: "Allah Ta'ala suffices for the worries of a person who acquires *Tafaqquh* (understanding) in the Deen, and He bestows to him (Rizq) from such sources which he had not even imagined."

43. "I heard Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (a famous Sahaabi – Radhiyallahu anhu) saying: "I have heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saying: "The one who guides (someone) towards goodness receives the reward of the one who practises that goodness, and Allah Ta'ala loves to aid those who are suffering."

44. Imaam Abu Yusuf said that Imaam Abu Hanifah was extremely generous. He would bestow many favours on his acquaintances. If any of them expressed gratitude, he would say: "You express gratitude to me while this is the Rizq bestowed to you by Allah Ta'ala. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "I neither give you anything nor prevent you from anything. I am merely a treasurer. I spend wherever Allah Ta'ala commands me."

45. When Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan, the Ustaadh of Imaam Abu Hanifah passed away, all the students asked him to occupy the position of the Ustaadh. Imaam Abu

Hanifah said that he would do so on condition that ten Ulama give him a guarantee that they will ensure that he remains steadfast on the Sunnah.

46. Once in the Musjid, Imaam Abu Hanifah was giving a discourse on the Shar'i process of Qiyaas. A man sitting in one corner rudely shouted: "Abandon qiyaas. The first being who had employed qiyaas was Iblees." Imaam Abu Hanifah responded: "You have mis-manipulated a correct premiss. Iblees had employed qiyaas to reject the command of Allah Ta'ala while we are employing Qiyaas for the sake of practising on a hukm of the Shariah. We analogize a mas'ala on the basis of another ma'salah." The man called out: "I repent. May Allah Ta'ala brighten your heart, for you have brightened my heart." (*A sincere person readily accepts his error*).

47. "Erroneous *qiyaas* (i.e. personal opinion) is worse than urinating in the Musjid."

48. "A moment which a Sahaabi had spent in the company of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is superior to a lifetime of our good deeds."

49. In his quest for Knowledge, Imaam Abu Hanifah went to Hadhrat Ataa Bin Abi Rabaah. He asked Imaam Abu Hanifah: "From where are you?" Imaam Sahib: "From Iraq." Ataa': "Who are the people with whom you associate? Imaam Sahib:"They do not deny Taqdeer. They do not proclaim anyone kaafir on the basis of only sin, and they are not disrespectful to the Salafus Saaliheen." Ataa':

“I found the Salafus Saaliheen (Sahaabah and Taabi’een) on these beliefs.”

50. “*Amal (practising good deeds)* is subservient to *Ilm* just as the limbs are subservient to the eyes. *Ilm* is beneficial even with a little *Amal*, unlike much *Amal* with *jahaalat*. Its similitude is like a traveller in the desert who has little provisions, but knows the road. He is better than a traveller with much provisions, but who does not know the way out of the desert.”

51. When someone posed a question to Imaam Abu Hanifah, it was his practice to procrastinate. He would not immediately answer. After some time, he would draw a deep breath and say: “O Allah! Do not apprehend me.” Then he would answer the question.

52. When the Khawaarij heard that Imaam Abu Hanifah does not proclaim a person a kaafir on the basis of sin, they sent a group of 70 persons to him. When they reached Imaam Abu Hanifah’s *majlis*, they said: “O Abu Hanifah! We and you are related to the same *Millat (Deen)*. Allow us to be near to you.”

Imaam Abu Hanifah instructed his students to give way to allow the group to come close to him. As soon as they had surrounded him, they drew their swords and after insulting him said: “To slay you is better than waging Jihaad for 70 years for each one of us. But we do not want to be unjust to you.” Imaam Sahib said: “Are you prepared to mete out justice to me?” They said: “Yes, why not?”

Imaam Sahib: "First sheathe your swords." Khawaarij: "We have unsheathed these swords specifically for dying them red with your blood."

Imaam Sahib: "Take Allah's name and proceed with your talk."

Khawaarij: "Assume that outside the Musjid are two janaazahs. One is of a man who had died as a consequence of excessive consumption of liquor. The second one is of an adultress who had committed suicide after having become pregnant. What is the ruling pertaining to their janaazah?"

Imaam Abu Hanifah: "With which Millat are these two related? Are they Yahudi?"

Khawaarij: "No!"

Imaam Sahib: "Are they Nasaara?"

Khawaarij: "No!"

Imaam Sahib: "Are they Majoosi?"

Khawaarij: "No!"

Imaam Sahib: "Then with which Millat are they related?"

Khawaarij: "With the Millat which recites *Laa-ilaaha illallaahu Muhammadur Rasulullah.*"

Imaam Sahib: "Tell me – what portion of Imaan is this testimony?"

Khawaarij: "Division of Imaan is not valid. Either one has perfect Imaan or no Imaan."

Imaam Sahib: "It is indeed surprising that you are asking me about such persons to whose Imaan you, yourselves, have testified."

Khawaarij (*feeling somewhat embarrassed*): “Tell us, are they of the inmates of Jannat or of the Fire?”

Imaam Sahib: “If you constrain me, then I shall say about them what Hadhrat Ibraaheem (Alayhis salaam) had said about his people. He said: “Whoever follows me is of me, and whoever disobeys me, then verily, You (O Allah!) are the Most Forgiving , The Most Merciful.”

And, I shall say what Hadhrat Isaa (Alayhis salaam) had said about his people: “If You (O Allah!) punish them, verily, they are Your servants. And, if You forgive them, verily You are Mighty and Wise.”

And, I shall say what Hadhrat Nooh (Alayhis salaam) had said: “And why should I be concerned with their deeds? Verily, their reckoning is only for my Rabb, if indeed you can understand.”

On hearing this, the attackers sheathed their swords, renounced their erroneous beliefs and entered the fold of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah.

53. “In sin I saw disgrace. I abandoned it for the sake of honour. This then was the way for gaining piety.”

54. “If in this world and in the Aakhirat the Ulama and the Fuqaha are not among the Auliya of Allah, then they will have no friend (and protector).” (*The Qur'aan says: “Verily, of His servants, only the Ulama fear Allah.”* (If

the customary molvi/sheikh lacks khashiyat, he will not be in the roll of the Ulama. He will be friendless.)

55. “For the fear of my *Amr Bil Ma’roof Nahyi Anil Munkar* being defective, I have been seeking forgiveness (making Istighfaar) for fifty years after every Salaat.”
56. Ibraahim Bin Suwaid asked Imaam Abu Hanifah: “After the Fardh Hajj is Nafl Hajj better or Jihad? “ Imaam Sahib said: “After performing the Fardh Hajj, one Jihad is superior to 50 Nafl Hajj.” *(Note: Jihad here refers to a valid Shar’i Jihad, not to the type of fraudulent, satanic ‘jihad’ which American surrogates such as ISIS, are executing at the behest and directive of the CIA.)*
57. Abdul Aziz Abu Rawwaad said to Imaam Abu Hanifah: “The Khalifah has summoned me. How should I acquit myself in his presence?” Imaam Sahib said: “Make Salaam, then be silent. It is his responsibility to initiate a conversation. When he says something and asks you, then if you know, respond.”
58. Abdul Aziz Abi Muslim said: “Once while walking with Imaam Abu Hanifah, I asked him about the Hadith narrated by Qais Bin Muslim. He said: “Subhaanallaah! The desire for Knowledge has deprived you of beautiful etiquette. Ilm has awe and honour. Dignity and calm are necessary requisites for a man of Knowledge. The one who

searches for Knowledge should humble himself in the presence of the Ustaadh. Come to me tomorrow (with your question).” *Ilm is a lofty subject. It is not a hobby. It should not be accompanied by a lackadaisical attitude, hence Imaam Abu Hanifah ordered him to come the following day specifically to gain knowledge about the Hadith.*”

59. “A compiler of Hadith who is without *Tafaqquh* is like one who accumulates medicine (but lacks the ability to correctly utilize it).”

60. Someone informed Imaam Abu Hanifah that in the Musjid of Kufah some people had gathered to discuss Fiqh. He said: “Is there a qualified and experienced Faqih among them?” The reply was in the negative. He said: “Never will they be blessed with *Tafaqquh*.” *This is an adequate commentary for the study circles/groups of modernists and unqualified personnel who have set themselves up as Mujtahids.*

61. Hadhrat Makki Bin Ibraaheem (rahmatullah alayh) is among the *Jaleelul Qadr* (exceptionally great and outstanding) Asaatizah of Imaam Bukhaari (Rahmatullah alayh). Most of the *Thulaathiyaat* (Chains with only three narrators linking to Rasulullah –Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) of Imaam Bukhaari have been acquired from him. He says: “I used to be involved in trade. Once when I

was in the presence of Imaam Abu Hanifah, he said to me: "O Makki, I see that you are involved considerably in trade. Trading without the Ilm of the Deen culminates in much corruption. Why do you not pursue Knowledge of the Deen." As a result of Imaam Abu Hanifah's persistence, Allah Ta'ala bestowed to me the taufeeq to become involved in the acquisition of Ilm. I have thus acquired a substantial portion of Ilm. Now, after every Salaat I make dua for Imaam Abu Hanifah. It was by virtue of his barkat that Allah Ta'ala had opened up the portal of Ilm for me."

62. Fadhl Bin Atiyyah said that while giving naseehat to his (Atiyyah's) son, Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "O Muhammad! If you do not acquire the tafseer from the Ulama of a Hadith which you have learnt, your effort will go wasted and Knowledge will then become a calamity.

63. Imaam Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak said: "Abu Hanifah was *Afqahun Naas (the one who had the greatest understanding of Fiqh)*. I did not see the likes of him." (*Manaaqib, Muwaffaq wal Intisaar*)

64. Imaam A'mash said: "Abu Hanifah was aware of such masaa-il of which Hasan Basri, Ibn Seereen and Qataadah nor any one else besides them, were not aware.

(*Intisaar wa Manaaqib Kurduwi*)

65. Sa-eed Bin Uroobah said to Sufyaan: "From the information reaching us from your city it appears that there is no greater Faqeeh than Abu Hanifah. I wish that the Knowledge which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed to him be granted to all Muslims. Allah Ta'ala has granted him victory in Fiqh. It is as if he was created for this. (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar Kurduwi*)
66. Yahyah Bin Saeed Al-Qattaan would frequently comment: "Regarding developing expediencies, besides Abu Hanifah there is no one else to explain the Hukm of the Shariah."
67. Uthmaan Al-Madeeni said: "Abu Haneefah is a greater Faqeeh than Hammaad, Ibraahim, Alqamah and Ibn Aswad (they were jaleelul qadr Fuqaha and Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen who were the Asaatizah of Imaam Abu Hanifah)." (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar*)
68. Jareer Bin Abdullah said: "Mugheerah advised me: 'Remain in the Circle of Abu Hanifah, and you will become a Faqeeh. Even Ibraaheem Nakha'i would be in his Circle if he was here.'" (*Muwaffaq, Kurduri*)
69. Mis'ar said: "I did not see in Kufah a greater Faqeeh than Imaam Abu Hanifah. I envy his *fiqaahat*." (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar*)
70. Muqaatil said: "I have seen the Taabi'een and Tab-e-Taabi'een, but I did not see anyone with such *Baseerat*

(*spiritual insight*) and intellectual discernment as Abu Hanifah." (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar*)

71. Yahya Bin Aadam said: "There is consensus of all the Fuqaha and Men of Wisdom that there is no greater Faqeeh than Abu Hanifah. No one before him has laboured so much in this field (of Fiqh), hence Allah Ta'ala has opened up the Way for him." (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar, Kurduri*)
72. Imaam Shaafi' said: "Whoever desires the Knowledge of Fiqh should cling to Abu Hanifah and his As-haab (Students). All are his children in Fiqh." (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar*)
73. Wakee' said: "I did not meet an Aalim who is a greater Faqeeh than Imaam Abu Hanifah." (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar, Kurduri*)
74. "If someone after visiting Imaam Abu Hanifah, went to Sufyaan Thauri, he would say: 'There is no greater Faqeeh on the surface of the earth than the one from whom you have come.'" (*Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*)
75. Imaam Ja'far Saadiq said: "Abu Hanifah is the greatest Faqeeh of Kufah."

76. Hasan Bin Ammaarah was the Ustaadh of Sufyaan Thauri. Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak narrated, that Hasan Bin Ammaarah whilst holding the reins of Imaam Abu Hanifah's horse said: "By Allah! I have not seen a greater Faqeeh and a more eloquent and intelligent person than you. You are the chief of all the Fuqaha. Those who criticize you, do so because of envy." (*Tabyeeidhus Saheefah and Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*)
77. Ishaq Bin Raahwaih who was among the very senior Shuyookh of Imaam Bukhaari said: "I have not seen a man who is more aware of Ahkaam and Qadhaaya than Imaam Abu Hanifah." (*Muwaffaq, Intisaar*)
78. Isaa bin Yunus advised his Students: "Never believe anyone who speaks ill of Imaam Abu Hanifah. By Allah! I have not seen a superior person and a greater Faqeeh than him." (*Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*)
79. Al-Khateeb narrated from Ahmad Bin Muhammad Al-Balkhi who said: "I heard Shaddaad Bin Hakeem say: "I did not see anyone more learned than Abu Hanifah."
80. Khalf Bin Ayyub said: "Knowledge was transferred from Allah Ta'ala to Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then to his As-haab, then to the Taabi'een, then to Abu Hanifah and his Ashaab."

81. Muhammad Bin Sa'd Al-Kaatib said: "I heard Abdullah Bin Daawood Al-Khareebi saying: "It is incumbent on the People of Islam to supplicate to Allah Ta'ala for Abu Hanifah in their Salaat (i.e. after Salaat)."
82. Imaam Abu Ja'far Ash-Sheezamaaru narrated that Shaqeeq Balkhi said: "Imaam Abu Hanifah was the most pious of people, the most learned and the greatest worshipper."
83. Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak said: "I entered Kufah and asked the Ulama: "Who is the most learned in your city?" All of them said: "Imaam Abu Hanifah." I said to them: "Who is the greatest Aabid (worshipper in your city) and the one who is most engrossed in Ilm?" They all said: "Imaam Abu Hanifah." I asked them about moral character, and they all said: "We do not know of anyone with the best moral character other than Imaam Abu Hanifah."
84. Al-Hasan Bin Al-Haarith said: "I heard An-Nadhr Bin Shumail saying: "The people were asleep regarding Fiqh until Abu Hanifah woke them (from their slumber)."
85. Abu Wahab Muhammad Bin Nazaahim said: "I heard Ibnul Mubaarak saying: "The most learned in Fiqh is Abu Hanifah. I did not see the likes of him in Fiqh."
86. Abu Daawood said: "May Allah have mercy on Abu Hanifah. Indeed he was an Imaam."

87. Sufyaan Bin Uyainah who is one of the greatest Imaams and Muhadditheen said: “The first person who had initiated me into teaching Hadith, and who made me a Muhaddith was Abu Hanifah.”
88. Ibn Hajr Al-Makki says in *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan* that Imaam Abu Hanifah had acquired Knowledge from 4000 Mashaaiikh who were from the Aimmah of the Taabi'een.
89. Abu Hafs Umar Bin Al-Imaam Bakr Bin Muhammad Bin Ali Az-Zarnaji narrated that his father said: “There was a debate between the As-haab of Imaam A'zam Abu Hanifah and the As-haab of Imaam Muazzam Shaadi' (Radhiyallahu anhum). Each group gave prominence to its Imaam. Then, Abu Abdullah Bin Abu Hafs Al-Kabeer who was the Imaam of the Shaafi' Aimmah of Hadith, said: “Count the Mashaaiikh of Shaadi' (Rahimahullah). Howmany were they? They counted and said that the number is 80. Then he said to them: “Count the number of the Mashaaiikh of Abu Hanifah.” The number reached four thousand.” This established the superiority of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh). In fact, there was no need to even enumerate the number of their respective Mashaaiikh for determining this issue. Imaam Shaafi' (Rahmatullah alayh) himself said: “We all are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh.” Furthermore, Imaam Shaafi' was the student of Imaam Muhammad who was a very senior student of Imaam Abu Hanifah.

90. Sadrul Aimmah Muwaffaq Bin Ahmad narrated that 730 senior Mashaikh of the Muslimeen narrated from Imaam Abu Hanifah.
91. Sufyaan Thauri said: "In front of Abu Hanifah, we were like sparrows in front of an eagle. Verily, Abu Hanifah is the Sayyid (Chief) of the Ulama."
92. Yahya Ibn Maeen said: "Qiraa't by me is the Qiraa't of Humzah, and Fiqh (by me) is the Fiqh of Abu Hanifah."
93. Al-Haafiz As-Sam'aani says in *Al-Ansaab*, Mis-ar said: "He who puts Abu Hanifah between himself and Allah, I have the hope that he shall not fear."

These few comments of illustrious Authorities of the Shariah more than suffice to testify to the greatness of Imaam Abu Hanifah.

STUDENTS OF THE SAHAABAH AND THE POSITION IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

The following chart presents a simple and a concise account of the Students of the Sahaabah. The names in bold print are Sahaabah. The name/s in the second line is/are the direct Student/s of the Sahaabi/Sahaabah, and the names in the third line are the Fuqaha and Aimmah Mujtahideen of these Students, all of whom are Taabieen. In actual fact, it may be said without exaggeration that they all were the Students of the Sahaabah.

1. Sayyidina Umar bin Al-Khattaab (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Aswad

Ibraheem – Hammaad – Abu Hanifah

*Alqamah Bin Waqqaas Al-Laithi (Student of Umar Bin Khattaab)

Muhammad Bin Ibraheem At-Taimi – Yahya Al-Ansaari – Abu Hanifah

2. Sayyidina Uthmaan (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Humraan

Ataa Bin Abi Rabaah - Abu Hanifah

3. Sayyidina Ali Bin Abi Taalib (Karramallahu Wajhahu)

* Abul Hallaas

Al-Haarith Bin Abdir Rahmaan - Abu Hanifah

4. Sayyidina Abdullah Bin Mas'ood (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Alqamah Bin Qais/Aswad

Ibraheem An-Nakha'i – Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan – Abu Hanifah

5. Sayyidina Abu Zarr (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Al-Haitham

Hasan Al-Basri - Abu Hanifah

6. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Ataa Bin Abi Rabaah

Abu Hanifah

*Abdur Rahmaan Bin Al-Hurmuz Al-A'raj (Student of Abu Hurairah) -

Abu Hanifah

*Sa'eed Bin Al-Musayyab (Student of Abu Hurairah)–

Ibn Shihaab Az-Zuhri - Abu Hanifah

*Abu Saalih (Student of Abu Hurairah) –

Haitham Bin Habeeb - Abu Hanifah

7. Sayyidina Anas Bin Maalik (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Haitham Bin Habeeb

Abu Hanifah

*Muhammad Bin Al-Munkadir (Student of Anas Bin Maalik) -

Abu Hanifah

*Ibn Shihaab Az-Zuhri/Muhammad Bin Al-Munkadir
(Students of Anas Bin Maalik)-

Abu Hanifah

8. Sayyidina Abdullah Bin Umar (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Naafi'

Abu Hanifah

*Abdullah Bin Dinaar (Student of Ibn Umar) –

Abu Hanifah

*Ataa Bin Abi Rabaah (Student of Ibn Umar) –

Abu Hanifah

*Ataa Bin Yasaar (Student of Ibn Umar) –

Abu Hanifah

*Abu Bakr Bin Abdillah Bin Abil Jahm (Student of Ibn Umar)-

Abu Hanifah

*Ibn Ya'mur (Student of Ibn Umar)–

Alqamah Bin Marthad – Abu Hanifah

*Sa'eed Bin Jubair (Student of Ibn Umar) –

Alqamah – Ibraheem An-Nakha'i – Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan – Abu Hanifah

9. Sayyidina Abdullah Bin Abbaas (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Ataa Bin Abi Rabaah –

Abu Hanifah

*Ma'n Bin Abdur Rahmaan (Student of Ibn Abbaas)

Abu Hanifah

*Sha'bi (Student of Ibn Abbaas)–

Hammaad – Abu Hanifah

*Sa'eed Bin Jubair (Student of Ibn Abbaas) –

Alqamah – Ibraheem An-Nakha'i – Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan – Abu Hanifah

10. Sayyidina Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Atiyyah Al-Awfi

Abu Hanifah

*Ataa Bin Yasaar (Student of Abu Saeed Khudri) –

Abu Hanifah

11. Sayyidina Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Abu Burdah

Abu Hanifah

12. Sayyidina Jaabir Bin Abdullah (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Abuz Zubair

Abu Hanifah

*Hammaam Bin Al-Haarith (Student of Jaabir Bin Abdullah)

Ibraheem An-Nakha'i – Hammaad Bin Abi Sulaimaan – Abu Hanifah

13. Sayyidina Abu Qataadah (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Muhammad Bin Al-Munkadir -

Abu Hanifah

14. Sayyidina Mugheerah Bin Shu'bah (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Sha'bi

Hammaad – Abu Hanifah

15. Sayyidina Buraidah (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Abdullah Bin Buraidah/Sulaimaan Bin Buraidah

Alqamah Bin Marthad – Abu Hanifah

16. An-Nu'maan Bin Basheer (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Sha'bi

Hasan Al-Basri – Abu Hanifah

17. Sayyidina Jareer Bin Abdullah Al-Bajali (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Hammaam Bin Al-Haarith -

Ibraheem – Hammaad – Abu Hanifah

18. Sayyidina Mu'aaz Bin Jabal (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Abu Muslim Al-Khaulaani

Al-Haarith Bin Abdir Rahmaan – Abu Hanifah

19. Sayyidina Abdullah Bin Haarith Bin Jaza (Radhiyallahu Anhu)

*Abu Hanifah (Imaam Abu Hanifah heard directly from this Sahaabi)

20. Sayyidatina Aishah (Radhiyallahu Anha)

*Alqamah/Aswad -

Ibraheem – Hammaad – Abu Hanifah

*Ataa Bin Abi Rabaah (Student of Aishah)–

Abu Hanifah

*Masrooq (Student of Aishah) -

Sha'bi – Abu Hanifah

*Masrooq

Sha'bi – Haitham Bin Habeeb – Abu Hanifah

21. Sayyidatina Umm Haani (Radhiyallahu Anha)

* Abu Saalih Az-Zayyaat

Al-Haarith Bin Abdur Rahmaan – Abu Hanifah

The above chart is simply a sample indicating the glorious link which Imaam Abu Hanifah enjoyed with the Sahaabah. There are innumerable such short, glorious links in the Golden *Isnaad* of Imaam Abu Hanifah linking him to the Sahaabah. Among the Aimmah Mujtahideen of the Four Math-habs, Imaam Abu Hanifah was the greatest and most important bearer of the Knowledge of the Shariah imparted by the Sahaabah.

Imaam Abu Hanifah's *Isnaad* is in fact *Asah-hul Asaaneed* (the most authentic Chain of Narrations). His *Asaaneed* are more authentic than the Chains of even Imaam Bukhaari and Imaam Muslim. While Imaam Bukhari had to contend with an intervening gap of two centuries in his exercises to establish authenticity by sifting through deluges of names, the *Asaaneed* of Imaam Abu Hanifah were all glorious and golden – short and solid – Sahaabi to Taabi'ee to himself.

CRITICISM AGAINST IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

The following dissertation regarding Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) appears in *I'laaus Sunan*:

“It has been on the wagging tongues of some *muta-assibeen* (bigots) that Imaam Abu Hanifah had little awareness of Hadith. Only a few Ahaadith had reached him. Undoubtedly, this is a heinous fabrication which makes one quiver with abhorrence, and makes one's hair stand on edge.

None but a brainless jaahil or a convoluted bigot will make this averment. On the contrary, the statements of the Muhaqqiqeen among the Fuqaha and Muhadditheen confirm that Imaam Abu Hanifah was the repository of Ahaadith in abundance. Such a huge quantity of his Ahaadith has been compiled that only one of his status will be able to encompass them.

The evidence for this is firstly the testimony of prominent and famous Muhadditheen such as Makki Bin Ibraaheem (a very senior Shaikh of Imaam Bukhaari), Abdullah Bin Mubaarak and Yazeed Bin Haaron. They have acknowledged that Imaam Abu Hanifah was the most learned of his era.

Secondly is the Consensus (Ijma') of these authorities that Imaam Abu Hanifah was a Faqeeh, Mujtahid and an Imaam in Fiqh. Al-Khateeb narrated from Muhammad Bin Bishar who said: I visited Abu Hanifah and Sufyaan (Thauri). When I came to Abu Hanifah, he asked: From

where have you come?" I said: "From Sufyaan." He said: "You have come from such a man on whom would be dependent Alqamah and Aswad if they had been present." Then I went to Sufyaan who asked: "From where have you come?" I said: "From Abu Hanifah." He said: "Indeed you have come from the one who is the most learned in Fiqh on earth."

Muhammad Bin Mazaahim said: "I heard Ibnul Mubaarak say: "If Allah Azza Wa Jal had not aided me with with Abu Hanifah and Sufyaan, I would have been like the rest of the people." It was said to Al-Qaasim Bin Ma'n Ibn Abdur Rahmaan Bin Abdullah Bin Mas'ood: "Are you pleased to be of the servants (*ghilmaan* – students) of Abu Hanifah?" He responded: "People have not sat in a more beneficial company than the company of Abu Hanifah." All of this has been narrated by As-Suyuti in *Tabyeeidhus Saheefah*, page 16 and 17.

Ar-Rabee' and Hurmalah said: "We heard Ash-Shaafi' saying: "The people (i.e. the Ulama and Fuqaha) are the children of Abu Hanifah in Fiqh."

"It is not hidden upon anyone who has the slightest understanding that Fiqh and Ijtihaad are not possible without Hifz of Ahaadith, Aathaar and the statements of the Sahaabah and Taabi'een, and of their differences, awareness of Naasikh and Mansookh of the Qur'aan and Sunan..... Thus, when the Muhadditheen and their Akaabir have submitted to the Fiqh of Imaam Abu Hanifah, and in fact have conceded that he is *Afqahun Naas* (most learned of the Fuqaha in Fiqh), and when they have acknowledged that he is an Imaam among the

Aimmaah of the Muslimeen, they have then (logically) accepted that he was a Haafiz of Hadith – having mastery and being grounded in it.

Thirdly, Ath-Thahabi has enumerated him (Imaam Abu Hanifah) among the Huffaaz of Hadith..... Ibn Qayyim said in *I'laamul Muwaqqi'een*: “Yahya Bin Aadam (who was among the Shuyookh of Imaam Bukhaari) said: “Nu'maan (Imaam Abu Hanifah) had compiled all the Ahaadith of his city (Kufah). Thus, he focused on such narrations which which were last at the time of the demise of the Nabi (Alayhis salaam). Some Ulama of the era mentioned this in the Kitaab, *Tazkiratul A'zam*. Ibn Hajr Al-Makki narrated in *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan* from Al-Hasan Bin Saalih (who was Saheeh and an Imaam of Hujjat): “Verily, Abu Hanifah was thorough in scrutinizing Naasikh and Mansookh. He was an expert of the Hadith of the people of Kufah. He was strict in obeying that on which the people were (i.e. following the Ahaadith). He was a Haafiz of the Ahaadith which had reached the people of his city.”

Kufah was the headquarters of Ilm at that time. In Kufah there was a great assembly of senior Muhadditheen such as Ibn Uyainah, Sufyaan Thauri, Hafs Bin Ghiyaath, Al-A'mash Wakee' and others. Abu Hanifah had compiled the Ahaadith of all of them.

Yahya Bin Ma-een said: “I did not see anyone who surpassed Wakee' in issuing fatwa according to the opinion of Abu Hanifah. He had memorized all of his Ahaadith, and he had heard an abundance of Ahaadith

from Abu Hanifah. This statement of Yahya Bin Ma-een confirms that Abu Hanifah was not a man of a few Hadith.

Abu Bakr Bin Ayyaash said: Umar Bin Saeed, the brother of Sufyaan had died. We went to visit him (Sufyaan). A gathering was present. Among them was Abdullah Bin Idrees. Then Abu Hanifah with his group arrived. When Sufyaan saw him, he shifted from the place where he was seated. Then he stood up and embraced Abu Hanifah, and made him sit on his place. Then he sat in front of Abu Hanifah (like a student).

I said to him (Sufyaan): “O Abdallaah! Today I saw you doing something which I and my companions dislike of you.” He said: “And what is that?” I said: “Abu Hanifah came and you stood up and made him sit in your place and you dealt with him in an extraordinary manner.” He said: “And, what do you dislike about this? This is a man of Ilm of a lofty status. If I do not stand for his Ilm, then I stand for his age. If I don’t stand for his age, I stand for his Fiqh. If I don’t stand for his Fiqh, I stand for his piety.” Thus he silenced me. I had no response. Narrated by As-Suyuti in *Tabyeedus Saheefah*.

The statement of Sufyaan, i.e. “*He is a man of lofty Ilm*”, refers to the Ilm of Hadith, not to Fiqh because he mentioned Fiqh after this. Sufyaan Thauri also said: “It is necessary for the one who opposes Abu Hanifah to be higher than him in status and possess greater Knowledge than him. To find this is rare. When the two of them went for Hajj, he would walk behind Abu Hanifah, and not in

front of him. When they were questioned (about anything), he would not answer. It would be Abu Hanifah who would answer. (*Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*)

Imaam As-Sam'aani narrated from Hilaal Bin Yahya Al-Basri who narrated that Bin Khaalid As-Samti said: "In Basrah I used to frequent Uthmaan Al-Batti, the Faqeeh (of Basrah). He had adopted the Math-hab of Al-Hasan Basri and Ibn Seereen. I adopted their Math-hab. Thereafter I sought permission to go to Kufah to meet its Mashaaikh and to look at their Matha-hib, and to benefit from them. They directed me to Sulaimaan Al-A'mash because he was the most prominent in Hadith. I had with me some Masaa-il in Hadith about which I asked the Muhadditheen. However, no one could solve them for me.

I mentioned these in the Circle of Al-A'mash. This was mentioned to him. He told them (his companions) to bring me to him. I then went to him. He said: "Perhaps you say that the people of Basrah are more learned than the people of Kufah. Never! By the Rabb of Baitul Haraam! It is not so. Basrah did not produce anything except a storyteller or a dream-interpreter or a mourner. Wallaah! Even if in Kufah there was no one except a man who is not of its Arabs, but is from its *Mawaali*, he is aware of the Masaa-il of which Al-Hasan, Ibn Seereen, Qataadah, Al-Barri and others besides them are not aware." Then he expressed profound anger for me, so much so that I thought he would strike me with his staff. Then he said to someone who was present. Take him to the majlis of Nu'maan (Abu Hanifah). Wallaah! If he sees the smallest of his (Abu Hanifah's) Ashaab, he will know that if *Ahl-e-Mauqaf*

(i.e. the vast assembly at Arafat), he (the smallest one) will suffice for answering..... An-Nu'maan is more knowledgeable and better equipped for these Masaa-il."

After As-Samati met Imaam Abu Hanifah, he (Imaam Sahib) asked: "Perhaps you are a traveller from Basrah and you have been prohibited from our gathering?" I (As-Samati) said: "Yes." Imaam Abu Hanifah said: "Would you frequent Al-Batti?" I said: "Yes." He then said: "If Al-Batti had met me he would have abandoned numerous of his views."I then asked him about the Masaa-il which were difficult for me, and he answered."

Muhammad Bin Samaa'ah narrated: "Verily, In his books are narrated more than 70,000 Ahaadith. He selected Aathaar from forty thousand Ahaadith...."

The Author of *Jaamiul Masaaneed* narrated that the "Masaa-il of Abu Hanifah are approximately five hundred thousand. His kutub and the kutub of his Ashaab record these masaa-il." He also said: "It is well-known that Al-Ummam Al-Kaamil Al-Munsif Ibn Sareej (rahimahullah) who was among the prominent Ashaab of Imaam Shaafi' once heard a jaahil (ignoramus) criticizing Abu Hanifah. He (Imaam Sareej) said: "O man! You criticize Abu Hanifah whilst it is acknowledged that three quarters of Knowledge is for him whilst he has not conceded one quarter for them (for others)....."

Ibn Hajar Al-Makki says in *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*: "It is mentioned that he (Abu Hanifah) acquired (Hadith) from four thousand Mashaaikh from the Aimmah of the

Taaba'ieen, hence Ath-Thahabi and others listed him (Abu Hanifah) in Tabaaqaatul Huffaaz among the Muhadditheen. Whoever attributes paucity of Hadith to him, does so because of his carelessness or his envy.”

Numerous are the Ahaadith of Abu Hanifah, whose *Isnaad* is linked to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). From them are the narrations which the Huffaaz have compiled in their *Masaaneed*. And from them are the narrations of his Companions, Muhammad Bin Al-Hasan in Al-Aathaar, Al-Muwatta, Kitaabul Hajj, Al-Mabsoot, Az-Ziyaadaat, Aljaamius Sagheer, Al-Kabeer, etc., and by Abu Yusuf, Ibnul Mubaarak Alhasan Bin Ziyaad and others in their respective kutub, and by Wakee' Ibnul Jarraah in his Musnad, and by Ibn Abi Shaibah and Abdur Razzaq in their respective *Musannafs*, and by Al-Haakim in his *Mustadrak*, and by Ibn Hibbaan in his *Saheeh* , and by Al-Baihqi in his *Sunan*, and by At-Tibraabi in his three *Muaajam*, and by Ad-Daaraqutni in his *Sunan*, and in the *Gharaaib* of Maalik,etc. Ibn Hajar Al-Makki said in *Al-Khairaatul Hisaan*: “Verily, the Huffaaz have sourced numerous Ahaadith of Abu Hanifah in many *Masaaneed*. Numerous of it have reached us, and this is narrated in the *Musannadaat* of our (Shaafi') Mashaaikh.”

WHAT ALLAAMAH SHA'RAANI SAID ABOUT IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

“Illustrious Muhadditheen treasured in their possession the Masaaneed of Imaam Abu Hanifah. Imaam Sha'raani had stated with considerable pride that he had the good fortune of making *ziyaarat* of several *Masaaneed* of Imaam Abu Hanifah which bore the confirmatory

signatures of many Huffaaz of Hadith. The *Asaaneed* of the Ahaadith were extremely authentic. All the *Rijaal* were *Thiqah*. Not a single one of them had the blemish of *kithb* (lies/falsehood). The *Isnaad* is very close to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). [*Anwaarul Baari*]

In his *Kitaabul Meezaan*, Imaam Abdul Wahhaab Ash-Sha'raani, who was a senior Shaafi' Authority, says:

“My Sayyid (Master), Ali Al-Khawwaas (rahima hullaahu ta'ala) said: ‘If the Muqallidoon (followers) of Imaam Maalik and Imaam Shaafi’ (radhiyallahu anhuma) acquit themselves with justice, then none of them would find any fault (weakness) in any of the statements of Imaam Abu Hanifah (radhiyallahu anhu), after they have heard the praises of their Imaams for him (Abu Hanifah).’

Imaam Maalik had said: ‘If Abu Hanifah had to debate with me, arguing that half of this pillar is of gold and half of silver, most certainly he would be able to establish proof for it.’ Imaam Shaafi’ said: ‘All people (i.e. all the Fuqaha of all Math-habs) are the children of Abu Hanifah (radhiyallahu anhu) in Fiqh.’

If there was nothing else to vouch for the loftiness of his (Abu Hanifah's) status except that Imaam Shaafi' had omitted the Qunoot in the Subh (Salaat) when he had performed Salaat by the Qabr of Imaam Abu Hanifah despite Imaam Shaafi maintaining the Istihbaab of Qunoot, then this would have sufficed for the incumbency of respecting him and his Muqallideen.

While I was writing the kitaab, *Adillatul Mathaahib*, I searched by the grace of Allah for the statements of Imaam Abu Hanifah and his Ashaab (Students). I did not find any statement (or view) of Imaam Abu Hanifah or of his followers except that it was based on an Aayat (of the Qur'aan) or on a Hadith or on an Athar (of a Sahaabi) or a Dha'eef Hadith of many Turuq (Chains of Narration) or Saheeh Qiyaas based on a valid principle. Whoever wishes to become aware of this, should study my aforementioned Kitaab. In brief, the respect of the Aimmah Mujtahideen for Imaam Abu Hanifah has been confirmed. Therefore, no consideration should be accorded to the statements of others regarding Imaam Abu Hanifah and his followers.

Know, O my Brother! Verily, by the grace of Allah, I have researched the *Adillah* (proofs and evidences) of the Four Math-habs, particularly the *Adillah* of the Math-hab of Imaam Abu Hanifah (Radhiyallahu anhu). I selected it (his Math-hab) with greater care. I researched in this regard the Kitaab *Takhreej Ahaadithil Hidaayah* of Haafiz Zaila'ee, and other Kutub of *Shurooh* (Commentaries). I found the *Adillah* of Imaam Abu Hanifah and the *Adillah* of his Ashaab being Saheeh or Hasan or Dha'eef of multiple *Turuq* (chains of narrations) elevating the status to Hasan or Saheeh for validity of *Ihtijaaq*. The (corroborating) *Turuq* were either three or more until ten."

THE TAQWA AND ADAALAT OF IMAAM ABU HANIFAH

There is absolutely no doubt in the Wara', Zuhd, Taqwa and Adaalat of Imaam Abu Hanifah. No one can ever entertain any doubt in this sphere. All the Aimmah unanimously laud praises on him in this regard.

Regarding his *Thiqah* (Reliability) in Hadith, Al-Haafiz says in *At-Tahtheeb*: “*Muhammad Bin Sa'd Al-Ufi said: 'I heard Ibn Ma-een saying: 'Abu Hanifah is Thiqah. He would not narrate except what he had memorized, and he would not narrate that which he had not memorized.'* Saalih Bin Muhammad Al-Asadi narrated from Ibn Ma-een: ‘*Abu Hanifah is Thiqah in Hadith.*”